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2014



October 15, 2014

Hyatt Regency Hotel

Louisville, Kentucky

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American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.

The mission of the National Prison Braille Network (NPBN) is twofold:

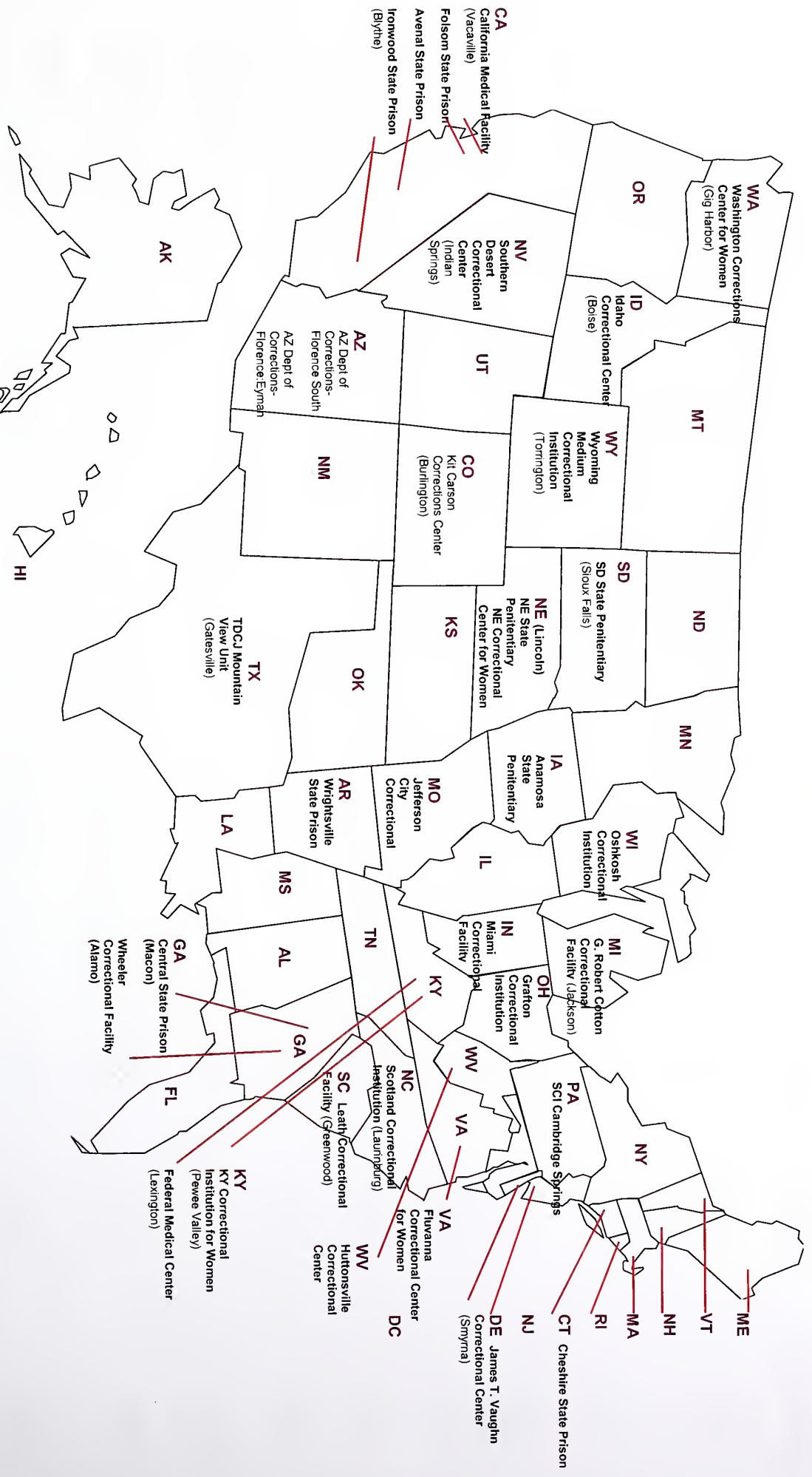
- To support and promote braille production facilities in prisons across the U.S. as major sources of high quality braille and experienced braille transcribers,
- To help ensure that inmate transcribers are well prepared for successful careers as braille transcribers upon release.

Network Services

- ✓ Centralized communication and professional development via a webpage (www.aph.org/pbf), email and U.S. mail correspondence with members, network gatherings (such as the annual National Prison Braille Forum and periodic focus groups), and the use of webcasts, teleconferences, and a listserv when appropriate.
- ✓ A source of information and educational materials related to braille production facilities inside prisons and to individual prison braille programs across the country. Publications to date include:
 - Prison Braille Programs: The Inside Scoop* (2004)
 - National Prison Braille Directory* (2004, 2009)
 - Guidelines for Starting and Operating Prison Braille Programs* (2009)
- ✓ Support for individual programs, such as the distribution of news releases highlighting program accomplishments, and letters of support for expansion plans, grant applications...
- ✓ Braille work referral: passing braille jobs along to others in the network when production capacity is reached, and helping programs secure braille jobs when possible.
- ✓ Training and consultation within prisons through staff visits, presentations, transcriber workshops, meetings with corrections staff, and electronic programs via the internet.
- ✓ Support for the Building Bridges with Braille reentry initiative, designed to prepare qualified offenders for employment as braille transcribers upon release, and to assist with their transition when appropriate.

Prison Braille Programs Across the United States

33 programs in 26 states



Prison Braille Programs Across the United States

33 programs in 26 states

(known to be operating as of August 4, 2014)

<u>State/Program</u>	<u>Operated by</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Inmates/ Transcribers</u>
Arizona				
1. Arizona Department of Corrections-Florence Eymann	Endn. for Blind	1995	male	8/8
2. Arizona Department of Corrections-Florence South	Endn. for Blind	1995	male	8/8
Arkansas				
3. Wrightsville Correctional Facility Braille Unit (Wrightsville)	school for the blind	1984	male	3/3
California				
4. Avenal State Prison (Avenal)	community college	2005	male	11/3
5. California Medical Facility (Vacaville)	nonprofit corp.	1960	male	14/3
6. Folsom State Prison (Folsom)	industries	1989	male	17/16
7. Ironwood State Prison (Blythe)	community college	2008	male	24/12
Colorado				
8. Kit Carson Corrections Center (Burlington)	school f/t blind	2013	male	11/8
Connecticut				
9. Cheshire State Prison (Cheshire)	corrections	1990	male	8/5
Delaware				
10. James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (Smyrna)	DE DVI & Corrections	1989	male	11/10
Georgia				
11. Central State Prison (Macon)	education	2006	male	19/18
12. Wheeler Correctional Facility (Alamo)	corrections corp/program	2014	male	
Idaho				
13. Idaho Correctional Center (Boise)	education	2001	male	15/10
Indiana				
14. Miami Correctional Facility (Bunker Hill)	education & industries	2008	male	37/10
Iowa				
15. Anamosa State Penitentiary (Anamosa)	industries	1992	male	

<u>State/Program</u>	<u>Operated by</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>#Inmates/ Transcribers</u>
Kentucky				
16. Federal Medical Center-Lexington (Lexington)	education	1995	male/female	25/4
17. KY Correctional Institution for Women (Pewee Valley)	industries	2000	female	16/15
Michigan				
18. G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility (Jackson)	nonprofit corp.	1962	male	45/29
Missouri				
19. Jefferson City Correctional Center (Jefferson City)	MO Rehab Svcs f/t Blind	1975	male	19/15
Nebraska				
20. Nebraska Correctional Center for Women (York)	industries	2005	female	
21. Nebraska State Penitentiary (Lincoln)	industries	1980	male	36/14
Nevada				
22. Southern Desert Correctional Center (Indian Springs)	ed. & Clark Co. Adult Ed	1988	male	
North Carolina				
23. Scotland Correctional Institution (Laurinburg)	industries	2011	male	21/21
Ohio				
24. Grafton Correctional Institution (Grafton)	industries	1991	male	45/23
Pennsylvania				
25. SCI Cambridge Springs (Cambridge Springs)	ed.-Meadville Lions Club	1994	female	10/4
South Carolina				
26. Leath Correctional Facility (Greenwood)	education	2002	female	13/13
South Dakota				
27. South Dakota State Penitentiary (Sioux Falls)	industries	1983	male	34/12
Texas				
28. TDCJ Mtn View Unit Braille/Computer Recovery Facility-Gatesville	education & industries	1999	female	92

<u>State/Program</u>	<u>Operated by</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>#Inmates/ Transcribers</u>
Virginia				
29. Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (Troy)	education	2008	female	20/8
Washington				
30. Washington Corrections Center for Women (Gig Harbor)	school for the blind	1997	female	16/16
West Virginia				
31. Huttonsville Correctional Facility (Huttonsville)	industries	1985	male	6/4
Wisconsin				
32. Oshkosh Correctional Institution (Oshkosh)	education	1997	male	20/18
Wyoming				
33. Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution (Torrington)	industries	2010	male	9/8

Professionals in these states have expressed an interest in starting a braille program:

Louisiana: EOT Robin King, LA Dept. of Education & School for the Visually Impaired, 2013; Cindy Robinson, Teacher of VI, Oct. 2014
 Maine: Michael Shannon, ME Correctional Center (Windham), 2013
 Minnesota: EOT Kristen Oien, MN Dept. of Education & Marcie Koetke, MN Dept. of Corrections, 2014
 Montana: Sharon Sager, MT Correctional Enterprises & Steve Fugate, MT School f/t Def & Blind, 2013
 New Mexico: Dep. Warden Pete Perez, Western New Mexico Correctional, 2013
 Tennessee: Ralph Thompson (brother-in-law of Gary Mudd, APH Vice President for Public Affairs), 2014
 Utah: Hollie Murdock, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, 2014

Braille programs have ceased operations in these states/institutions:

Kansas: Elsworth Correctional Institution-related service (Elsworth)
 Massachusetts: Bay State Correctional Center (Norfolk)
 New York: Eastern New York Correctional (Napanoch)
 Pennsylvania: Bucks County Correctional Facility-related service (Doylestown)



American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.



National Prison Braille Forum

Roster by State

October 15, 2014

78 people from 20 states

Arkansas

Cindy Wilkinson AR School for the Blind

California

Michael Chan CALPIA (Prison Industries Authority): CATE Program
Laurie Garcia CA Department of Education
Grant Horrocks CTEBVI (California Transcribers and Educators of the BVI)
Peggy Schuetz Transcribing Mariners
Vanessa Stenz Transcribing Mariners
Robert Walling Transcribing Mariners

Colorado

Debbie Haberkorn CO Instructional Materials Center
Jim Olson CO Instructional Materials Center

Connecticut

Nancy Mothersele Dept. of Rehab. Services/Bureau of Education & Services
for the Blind in the State of CT

Delaware

Anne Lattanzi DE Division for the Visually Impaired
Todd Marvel DE Dept. of Corrections Men with a Message Braille Program

Georgia

Marie Amerson GA Braille Transcribers (retired)
Randy Davis AMAC (Alternative Media Access Center) at Georgia Tech
Kathy Segers GA Instructional Materials Center
Amanda Shook Wheeler Correctional Facility/Corrections Corp. of America

Indiana

Qyn Boswell	Boswell Braille Technologies
Leslie Durst	IN Educational Resource Center
Robert Eutz	Miami Accessible Media Project (MAMP)
Deborah Krise	Miami Accessible Media Project (MAMP)
Terry Lucas	Lafayette Braille & Accessible Media LLC
Paul Randolph	Miami Accessible Media Project (MAMP)
Betsy Scott	IN Educational Resource Center: Braille Project
Dezmon Weathers	IN Educational Resource Center

Kentucky

Debbey Adams	APH
Bob Brasher	APH
Vicki Buns	APH
Jan Carroll	APH
Janet Conover	KY Correctional Institution for Women
Wes Dawson	KY Correctional Institution for Women
Kyle DeJute	APH
Jim Erwin	KY Department of Corrections
Justin Gardner	APH
Robert Guillen	APH
Jayma Hawkins	APH
Lauren Hicks	APH
Nancy Lacewell	APH
Catherine Leslie	Federal Medical Center-Lexington
Jennifer McMahon	APH
Gary Mudd	APH
Fred Siegelman	KY Correctional Industries
Becky Snider	APH
Jane Thompson	APH
Tuck Tinsley III	APH
Denise Walls	KY Correctional Industries
C.A. Wilkerson	KY Correctional Industries
Dawn Wilkins	APH
Joseph Woods	KY Correctional Industries
Sally Yewell	APH

Maryland

Jennifer Dunnam	National Federation of the Blind, Jernigan Institute
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Michigan

Robert Beaton	State of MI Instructional Materials Center, Braille Production
Cindy Olmstead	Michigan Braille Transcribing Fund (MBTF)
Matthew Williams	Matthew Williams Enterprises, LLC

Minnesota

Marcie Koetke	MN Department of Corrections
Cindi Laurent	BANA UEB Task Force; NBA Chair, Braille Formats Committee
Kristin Oien	MN Department of Education
Ruth Stadheim	MN Department of Corrections

North Carolina

Donna Bailey	Scotland Prison/Richmond Community College
Cindy Belue	NCDPS Correction Enterprise
Amy Campbell	NC Department of Public Instruction
James Locklear	Correction Enterprises

Ohio

Paula Mauro	Center for Instructional Supports & Accessible Materials (CISAM)
Donald Morrow	Ohio Penal Industries (OPI)-Grafton Correctional Institution

South Carolina

Mandy Clayton	SC Instructional Resource Center
Jill Ischinger	SC School for the Deaf and the Blind
Marty McKenzie	SC School for the Deaf and the Blind
Lee Speer	SC Dept. of Education
Trent Tedder	SC School for the Deaf and the Blind

Tennessee

Carol McCarroll	Resource Center f/t Visually Impaired, TN School for the Blind, TN State Department of Education
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Texas

Delores Billman	Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice-Mountain View Unit
Melissa Klepper	Visual Aid Volunteers, Inc.
Tammy Nixon	Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice-Mountain View Unit
Diane Spence	Region 4 Education Service Center

Washington

Michael Sivill	WA State School for the Blind
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West Virginia

Donna See	WV Instructional Resource Center
Mary Jo Wagner	WV Instructional Resource Center

Wisconsin

Kurt Pamperin	Oshkosh Correctional Institution
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Wyoming

Lynn McAuley	WY Department of Corrections
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2014 National Prison Braille Forum



American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.

October 15, 2014
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2014 National Prison Braille Forum

Guidelines for 2-5 minute reports

Each year at the National Prison Braille Forum, participants are asked to report on the prison braille programs you work with, or if you are not currently working with a program, to tell us a bit about yourself and your interest in prison braille programs (maximum: 2 minutes). If more than one person from the same program attends the Forum, we ask that you select a spokesperson for the group, who will then introduce his or her colleagues (maximum: 5 minutes).

Please give us an update on your prison braille program...

- Your name and job title
- Introduce colleagues with job titles
- State
- Name of prison
- Name of program
- When program began
- Category of program (educational/vocational, prison industries, non-profit...)
- Number of men and/or women currently in program
- Services offered (braille, large print, electronic media...)
- Primary customers
- Major changes since the program began (if any)
- Major challenges: issues you have successfully addressed and/or areas in which you are facing challenges and could use advice
- Expertise you can offer others
- Advice to "beginners:" either professionals hoping to start prison braille programs, or graduates of programs starting work on the outside
- Other comments/suggestions/advice you'd like to share

For Forum participants not currently working with a braille program, tell us about yourself...

- Your name and job title
- State
- Agency or business
- Products and/or services provided by you and/or an agency
- Your interest in prison braille programs
- Major challenges you currently face
- Advice/expertise to share with others
- Help needed

Acronyms

Field of Vision/Blindness

BVI	Blind and visually impaired
EBAE	English Braille American Edition
O&M	Orientation and Mobility
UEB	Unified English Braille code

Organizations, Agencies, and Corporations

ACB	American Council of the Blind
AER	Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of BVI
AFB	American Foundation for the Blind
APH	American Printing House for the Blind
BANA	Braille Authority of North America
COSB	Council of Schools for the Blind
CTEBVI	California Transcribers and Educators of the Blind and Visually Impaired
IMRC/IRC	Instructional (Materials) Resource Center
NBA	National Braille Association
NFB	National Federation of the Blind
NLS	National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress

Field of Corrections

ACA	American Correctional Association
BJA	Bureau of Justice Assistance
CEA	Correctional Education Association
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOC	Department of Corrections
NCIA	National Correctional Industries Association
NRRC	National Reentry Resource Center

Product Ideas

for Braille Transcribers, Graphic Artists, and Proofreaders

APH Instructional Products Catalog, 2014-2015

Catalog Page

Tools and Equipment

Slates and Styluses	110-111
The Grandstand: Portable Reading Easel (\$50.00)	92
APH/Perkins Brailler (\$735.00)	112
APH Light Touch Perkins Brailler (\$730.00)	112
Light Box (\$460.00)	128
Mini-Lite Box (\$135.00)	128

Braille Codes

Braille Code Books: NLS and BANA	180
Quick Check: Index of Literary Braille Signs	93
Print (\$10.50), Braille (\$12.00)	
Nemeth Code Reference Sheet for Basic Mathematics	50
Print (\$5.00), Braille (\$12.00)	

Tactile Graphics

The Good Tactile Graphic Revised, DVD and Booklet (\$25.00)	94
Tactile Graphics Starter Kit (\$60.00)	83
Tactile Graphics Kit (\$266.00)	83
Crafty Graphics: Stencil Embossing Kit (\$137.00)	84
Crafty Graphics II: Supplemental Tools (\$71.00)	
Crafty Graphics: Stencil Embossing Kit	
Homegrown Video (\$2.00)	

Materials

Braille Paper: White, Manila, Fanfold Tractor-Feed	114
Aluminum Diagramming Foil for Tactile Graphics	83
Roll (\$76.00), Sheets (\$27.00)	
Textured Paper Collection (\$36.00)	85
Covers for Braille Documents (\$3.00/pair)	113
Bold Line Graph Paper (\$14.00)	84
Braille Labels and Sheets	80



Oshkosh Correctional Institution Braille Transcription Program

John Bett, Retired Wisconsin Department of Corrections Administrator

The Braille Transcription Program at Oshkosh Correctional Institution (OSCI) in Oshkosh, Wisconsin has been in existence since July 1997. The program uniquely melds inmate rehabilitation through specialized vocational training while meeting a rapidly escalating need for high quality educational Braille material for the blind and visually impaired. Six inmates were enrolled in the initial pilot group and transcribed one book in the first year. Braille transcription is very labor intensive and is therefore uniquely suited to be a prison centered program.

Since its inception, 50 inmates have graduated from the program with five of those graduates launching a successful community based Braille transcription service. The OSCI program has completed a total of 1,392 projects encompassing nearly four and a half million braille pages. Eighty-five books were transcribed in 2013 compared to one book completed in the pilot program year. The program has provided material to all 50 states and has recently done some projects for the international market.

In order to earn Literary Braille Certification an inmate must complete a nine month to one year long basic 12 technical college credit module and must earn a passing grade of 80% to obtain Library of Congress certification. Inmate students gain ancillary skills in the use of braille translation software, production of tactile graphics on various media, use of embossing and binding equipment, quality control and interpersonal communication and teamwork. Besides producing braille

for the written word, the program also produces tactile graphics so that the blind are able to visualize maps, graphs, scientific diagrams and other illustrations that the sighted use to understand concepts in textbooks.

The program provides employment opportunities to staff and inmates as well as to individuals in the community. In the prison, there is one staff supervisor certified in literary braille. The program employs 12 inmate transcribers, two inmate students, and two ancillary inmate workers. Four blind or visually impaired Library of Congress certified proofreaders in the community are utilized by the program. Three proofreaders earn an income from the OSCI Braille Program while one proofreader logs volunteer hours. All provide valuable feedback to transcribers and ensure the highest level of quality.

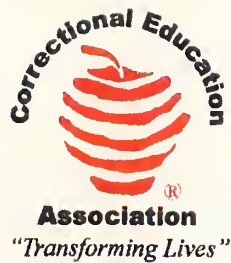
Educational projects produced by the program include textbooks for grades K—12 (all subjects), college textbooks (advanced courses in math, economics, statistics, and biology), university class lectures and study assignments, maps and miscellaneous tactile graphics for use in class. All book titles that are transcribed into braille are listed with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Louis Database for national internet access to allow potential users to determine what is available in braille, as well as to prevent braille transcription programs and services from duplicating a volume that is already transcribed.

In addition to educational materials provided by this program, recreational Braille books are

provided free of charge to blind children in Wisconsin. WisBraille provides copies of the printed books, and the OSCI Braille Program provides transcribers and production facilities to make these books usable for blind children. Over 4,000 copies of nearly 200 titles have been distributed in standard braille format as well as in embossed print format, in which transparent adhesive sheets with embossed braille are placed over the print text to allow sighted family members and friends to read along.

The program is a win-win situation for both the inmates as well as for the blind community that it serves. It meets the Wisconsin Department of Corrections mission of offender reintegration. Inmates learn highly specialized skills related to braille including hands on experience with advanced software programs and graphics media. The program provides meaningful work for incarcerated inmates and fosters a genuine sense of purpose and accomplishment. There is potential for employment in the field upon release, and it is an avenue for community service. It also provides high-quality Braille resources for students in Wisconsin and across the country at significantly discounted rates as well as income for blind or visually impaired proofreaders.

The OSCI program has developed into a nationally known center of braille production and received the 2004 Outstanding Contribution Award from The Wisconsin Council of the Blind. It has been recognized as one of the top prison braille transcription programs in the country.



News & Notes

Correctional Education Association
"An International Organization" Volume 36 Number 4 April-May 2014

Executive Director's Report to CEA and ACA

By: Stephen J. Steurer, Ph.D., Executive Director

The ABCs of UEB

A Guide for the Transition
from
English Braille American Edition (EBAE)
to
The Rules of United English Braille (UEB)
Constance Risjord

Preface

Braille, the ingenious system of six dots invented by Louis Braille almost 200 years ago, has meant literacy to thousands of blind people. Over the years, the braille code has changed as it has adapted to a new language conventions, and added new symbols that were needed to more accurately reflect different types of text. Since braille represents a living language—English—periodic modifications are necessary to reflect changes in our language and keep braille vital and contemporary. The development of United English Braille (UEB) had its origin in the need to make revisions to our current code so that it could be more accurately reflect changes in the English language.

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is responsible for the creation of the rules and guidelines for literary and technical materials used by blind persons in North America. BANA currently consists of representatives from 17 different organizations, and BANA's committees include dozens of knowledgeable people who care deeply about braille and literacy. The United English Braille (UEB) code project was started by BANA in the early 1990s to reduce the complexity and increase the accuracy of braille transcription. The project grew to become an international effort among seven English-speaking countries under the auspices of the International Council on English Braille. UEB, developed primarily by braille readers, is based on current literary braille and is designed to be flexible, unambiguous, extensible, and computable. In 2012, the United States adopted UEB as an official code.

This document outlines the major differences between *English Braille, American Edition* (EBAE) and UEB. It is not a complete instruction manual but it does provide examples and practice exercises so that people who already know EBAE will be able to quickly build on their knowledge of braille to understand UEB. Many thanks to Constance Risjord for volunteering to take on this project. It is a valuable and helpful resource as we make the transition to UEB.

Frances Mary D'Andrea
Chair, Braille Authority of North America



Frequently Asked Questions Braille Code Change for the United States

Q. Where did the idea of braille code change come from?

A. The braille code has changed many times since its creation in the 19th century. Changes have been made to assist braille readers in better understanding the text being communicated and to allow the production of braille to become more efficient. In 1991, more than 20 years ago, Dr. Abraham Nemeth and Dr. Tim Cranmer presented a paper to BANA discussing the urgency of the need to unify the various braille codes used in North America. The development of the computer braille code in the late 80s had created yet another set of braille characters for common symbols such as the dollar sign, the period, and the comma. The desire to create a unified code was partially in response to the perceived complexity of having multiple symbols for the same meaning. Later that year, BANA initiated a project to act on the recommendations in the Nemeth/Cranmer memorandum; that project became international in 1993 when BANA invited participation by the International Council on English Braille (ICEB). This process led to the development of the Unified English Braille Code (UEBC), which became known as UEB (Unified English Braille).

Q. Would changing the braille codes bring any real improvements?

A. Making changes to the braille codes would help braille readers, braille transcribers and producers, and teachers of blind students in a number of ways. For example:

- More consistency, less ambiguity, and fewer exceptions to braille rules would make braille easier to produce and would remove some barriers to learning braille.
- The ability to show more symbols in braille would give the braille reader better access to the same information that is available to print readers.
- Computer translation and backtranslation could be produced more quickly and with less human intervention than currently required.

More accurate computer translation from print to braille and from braille to print would:

- Reduce the errors and ambiguity experienced by those reading contracted braille on refreshable braille displays, which are the equivalent of a screen on a computer or mobile device
- Improve the backtranslation of braille that is written using electronic devices, so that braille users can write in braille to communicate easily and accurately with non-braille users
- Increase the timeliness of many types of braille production by permitting braille transcribers to focus more on advanced aspects of braille production rather than spending time on routine matters
- Reduce the labor required in braille production, allowing teachers to spend more time working with the students instead of braille materials for their students
- Mitigate, to some extent, the difficulties experienced by a reader who is required to read computer-produced braille that has been prepared by someone who has not been trained in braille transcription

Q. How much would braille really change?

A. The literary code would be easily read by those familiar with the current braille code. The following list is not comprehensive, but is provided to give a general sense of how literary braille would change:

- The dot formations of letters and numbers in the literary code would stay the same as they are today.
- Out of the current 189 contractions, nine would be deleted to make room in the code for greater consistency and less confusion in the representation of other symbols. The nine eliminated contractions are: ally, ation, ble, by, com, dd, into, o'clock, to.
- Some rules for when and when not to use contractions would be changed. Some contractions would be used more

often than they are now.

- Words that are currently written together such as "and the" would be spaced apart as they are in print.
- Most of the punctuation would remain the same, but some would change; for example, the opening parenthesis would become dots 5, 1-2-6 and the closing parenthesis would be dots 5, 3-4-5. This means that braille, just like print, would have separate and unique symbols to differentiate opening and closing parentheses. The period would be shown as dots 2-5-6 so that, just like in print, the same symbol is used regardless of whether it means full stop, decimal point, or dot.
- Some symbols, such as asterisk, percent sign, dollar sign, and degree sign, would change. Some of the newer symbols, like copyright, trademark, and crosshatch, would remain the same.
- The methods of indicating emphasis, such as italics, boldface, or underlining, would be changed. These attributes would not be shown more frequently than they are in current braille, but now a braille reader would be able to distinguish, for example, whether a word is in italics or was underlined.
- A major limitation of the base literary code we use today is that there is no good way to show the math symbols that sometimes occur in everyday writing and may or may not be related to actual math at all. Operational symbols such as plus and equals that do not currently exist in the literary code would be added.
- The rules for formatting of headings, paragraphs, contents pages, and other items involving spacing or placement on a page would not be affected.
- It would no longer be necessary to switch into a special code to read and write web and email addresses.

Q. Why can't we just modify existing code?

A. BANA has made small changes to the literary braille code from time to time. More and more, however, proposed changes would result in conflicts with existing codes.

Q. Would all the other codes we use now disappear?

A. No. The Nemeth code would still be available for use wherever it is needed. The music code and the International Phonetic Alphabet code would not be affected. Books and materials that have already been produced in older codes would still be available for readers who want them. Nothing would be removed from circulation in the near future.

Q. How hard would it be to change existing translation software?

A. UEB is already built into the Duxbury Braille Translation software and into popular refreshable braille devices, such as products from Freedom Scientific, HumanWare, and HIMS. It is also available for the Mountbatten Brailier. Individuals using iPhones or iPads with refreshable braille displays can use UEB now because it is available in the VoiceOver screen reader that comes with every computer or mobile device sold by Apple.

Q. Would all the old braille books still be usable?

A. Existing braille books would remain in libraries and still be quite readable.

Q. How long would the braille code change take?

A. A change to UEB would not happen overnight. Careful planning would be undertaken to determine the best ways to introduce teachers, transcribers, students, and general readers to the changes in the braille code. Full implementation would no doubt take many years.

Q. Where can I get more information about UEB?

A. More detailed information about the background of BANA's consideration of code change will be published over the next few weeks. Additionally, information about UEB can be found at <http://www.iceb.org/ueb.html>.

Close this window



For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Roberta Williams, (502) 899-2357 (office), rwilliams@aph.org

Policies regarding UEB Transition at the American Printing House
for the Blind (APH)

Louisville, Kentucky, July 24, 2014 –In November 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt Unified English Braille (UEB) as an official code for the United States. The formal motion approved reads as follows:

"Therefore, it is moved that the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) adopts Unified English Braille to replace the current English Braille American Edition in the United States while maintaining the *Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision*; the *Music Braille Code 1997*; and the *IPA Braille Code, 2008*. The official braille codes for the United States will be *Unified English Braille*, *Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision* and published updates; *Music Braille Code, 1997*; and *The IPA Braille Code, 2008*."

In October 2013, BANA conducted its first UEB Transition Forum, which was held concurrently with APH's Annual Meeting. This meeting of representatives designated by organizations directly involved in the adoption of UEB was convened to facilitate the planning of a coordinated transition between existing braille codes and UEB. Participants at this meeting collectively chose the date of January 4, 2016, as the date by which most phases of the transition to UEB will be completed or plans for completion will be in place. This date, Louis Braille's birthday, was affirmed by BANA at its November 2013 meeting.

Following these votes, APH has been engaged in analyzing what this change will mean for the textbooks and educational materials APH provides to students who are blind and visually impaired in the United States and its outlying areas. General information on APH's UEB Transition Plan is indicated below.

- Orders for textbooks in subjects using literary braille (i.e., social studies and language arts), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB for the 2015-16 school year.
- Orders for textbooks in technical subjects (i.e., science and mathematics), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth Code for the 2015-16 school year.
- Textbooks previously transcribed will be available in their original codes, following APH's policy of not duplicating previously transcribed textbooks and supplementary materials.

-MORE-

About the Federal Quota Program

The Federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind was passed by Congress in 1879 to provide adapted educational materials to eligible students working at less than college level who meet the definition of blindness. An annual registration of eligible students determines a per-capita amount of money designated for the purchase of educational materials produced by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). These funds are credited to Federal Quota accounts, which are maintained and administered by APH and its Ex Officio Trustees (EOTs) throughout the country and outlying areas.

APH is responsible for the overall administration of this law, which is accomplished through a network of professionals designated as EOTs. These professionals are the heads of residential schools for the blind; chief state school officers of each state department of education; heads of private, nonprofit schools for the blind; heads of programs for students who are multiply disabled; and heads of rehabilitation agencies. EOTs in each state and outlying area are legally entrusted with the administration of the Federal Quota Program for students within their systems. Registration of students and all orders for materials to be purchased with Federal Quota funds must be directed through EOTs.

For over 130 years, the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind has been affecting positive change in the lives of Americans who are visually impaired. Through materials that range from accessible books to fine motor development materials, from braille writing equipment to talking computer products and digital technology, APH and the Act address the specific learning needs that a vision loss creates.

The purpose of the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind is to place the most appropriate educational aids, tools, and supplies in the hands and lives of every student with vision loss below college level. APH helps these students achieve in the classroom and succeed in the workplace.



American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.

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Did You Know?

- Braille was invented in France in 1824 by a 15-year old named Louis Braille.
- Braille is a system of 6 raised dots arranged into patterns that represent numbers, letters, words, part-words and punctuation marks.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p
q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x
y	z						



Perkins Braillewriter in use.

Kentucky Correctional Industries

Braille Services

P.O. Box 449

Pewee Valley, KY 40056-0449

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Fax: (502) 241-0942

E-Mail: denise.walls@ky.gov

KCI

BRaille SERVICES

*Putting the World at Your
Fingertips!*



Braille Tales Twin vision book

KCI BRAILLE SERVICES



Translation software in use

The Kentucky Correctional Industries Braille Services program is located in the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women (KCIW) just outside of Louisville, Ky. KCIW is a multi-security level women's prison that houses approximately 700 inmates.

KCI Braille Services began in 2000 as a joint effort between KCIW, the American Printing House for the Blind, and Kentucky Correctional Industries (KCI). Since opening, KCI Braille Services has transcribed and embossed a total of over fifty million pages of braille.

The program is designed to provide high quality education materials for people who are visually impaired while teaching inmates a marketable job skill that will help make their transition back into society successful. In addition to these Braille skills, inmates learn responsibility, good work ethics and communication skills. Teamwork is stressed through group projects and mentoring opportunities.

The program employs up to fifteen transcribers and ten production floor team members. All transcribers are required to have a high school diploma or GED, at least five years time to serve, a good institutional record and some typing or computer skills. Transcribers are also required to complete the National Library of Congress (NLS) Literary Braille Transcription certification course before they may begin working.

Once Literary Braille certified, additional certification courses are available and encouraged for transcribers in Textbook Formatting, Music and Nemeth (math and science) codes. Group training sessions are held regularly to educate inmates in scanning, tactile graphics (pictures felt by touch), embossing (printing), proofreading, computer technology and to keep up-to-date on new formatting techniques.

The newest department of KCI Braille Services is the *Braille Tales* twin vision book division. *Braille Tales* is a special project with APH dedicated to providing free children's books to pre-K children with visual impairments. The books are designed to contain both print and Braille words thus encouraging children and parents to read along together.

KCI BRAILLE TRANSCRIBER STATISTICS

	Trainees	Certified
NLS Literary:	1	14
NLS Nemeth:	3	1
NLS Associates of Music:	0	2
NLS Music:	1	1
NBA Textbook Formats:	12	2

SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Literary Braille:
Novels Forms/Applications
Menus Bible Studies
Business Cards Twin Vision Books
Handbooks Schedules/Agendas
- Textbook Braille:
Textbooks Test materials
- Nemeth:
Math books Science books
- Tactile Graphics:
Maps Charts/Graphs
- Binding:
Comb Stapling
Covers Labels
- Music
- Foreign Language
- Scanning
- Thermoforming
- Proofreading
- Embossing
- Shipping/Mailing Services
- Printing



Tactile Graphics

...MOVING FORWARD...

***Please take a moment to give us some feedback from
your participation in the 2014 National Prison Braille Forum.***

Is the information you gathered at the 2014 Forum - both from presenters and via networking opportunities - going to be helpful to you in your daily work with a prison braille program? If so, what information will be most useful? If not, what issues/topics would you like to have learned more about.

What is your initial perception of the Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program (BTAP)? Do you know of transcribers who may be interested and eligible to participate? Do you have suggestions for making it better?

Was the Unified English Braille (UEB) transition discussion helpful to you? How well prepared do you feel your program is to make this code change?

One thing I did not get the chance to say/talk about during the Forum is...

THANK YOU AND WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT YEAR!

Please return feedback sheets to:

Becky Snider

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American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.



Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program

A Model Transition and Reentry Initiative

Pilot year: FY2015

Through the Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program (BTAP), APH will recruit transcribers who learned braille and earned national certifications while incarcerated as they transition back into society. Participants will live in Louisville for a few months while they transcribe for APH and receive training to learn about independent braille production, small business management, and networking. At the end of each apprenticeship, APH may decide to either hire qualified transcribers to work at APH full-time, or subcontract with them for braille transcription services after they return to their home states.

Purpose

BTAP addresses two clearly identified and reciprocal needs:

- APH's current and anticipated need for more highly qualified braille transcribers, and
- The need of transcribers who learned braille in prison for guidance, a structured environment, and networking opportunities as they establish braille transcription careers following release.

Rationale

APH

Since 1879, the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has worked in partnership with the federal government to identify the unique learning needs of students working below college level who are blind and visually impaired, and to develop and produce accessible education tools and materials for this population. As a line item in the President's budget, APH receives an annual appropriation from the U.S. Department of Education to research and manufacture educational products. APH completes a census each year of students with vision loss, and then provides the bulk of appropriation funding to states and outlying areas to purchase APH products for their students on a per-capita basis.

Providing textbooks and support materials in braille for blind students is key to APH fulfilling its national role in educating visually disabled students. The Braille Improvement Project, which APH launched in 2006 and continues to implement, calls for the full-time

employment of 18 braille transcribers. In spite of concerted efforts, APH has struggled to maintain this number, currently employing 12 full-time transcribers. APH also outsources braille transcription jobs to over 400 individuals or groups across the country. While APH never has trouble outsourcing literary textbooks, we often have problems outsourcing Nemeth Code transcription because it requires a higher level of learning.

Since braille requires considerable time to learn and become proficient, there are significant challenges to building a qualified transcriber workforce. Adding to this challenge, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted in 2012 to adopt an updated braille code (Unified English Braille, or UEB) for the United States. The current code used is English Braille American Edition. With implementation of UEB set to begin with textbook orders for the 2015-2016 school year, some older, more experienced transcribers have indicated that they will retire or leave the profession rather than learn the UEB Code. And all current transcribers will need UEB instruction and retraining if they are to maintain certification to transcribe textbooks. APH will endeavor to provide this training to all BTAP apprentices.

National Prison Braille Network

In 2000, APH partnered with the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women and Kentucky Correctional Industries to establish KCI Braille Services in Pewee Valley, Kentucky. That same year, APH launched the National Prison Braille Network. Vision and corrections professionals working with prison braille programs across the country join the network, free of charge, and many participate in the National Prison Braille Forum hosted by APH each October in conjunction with Annual Meeting. There are currently 33 known prison braille programs nationwide, with a combined total of approximately 800 men and 200 women transcribing braille. A recent survey conducted by APH indicates there is a large pool of qualified applicants for BTAP. [See Attachment A.]

The primary purpose of the Network is to provide people working directly with braille production facilities behind prison walls with opportunities to discuss common concerns, identify useful resources, celebrate accomplishments, and explore potential solutions to the unique challenges that these programs present. Typically, about 50 professionals attend the Forum each year. They consistently indicate that this conference provides them with a much-needed and meaningful chance to network and learn from colleagues across the country.

A major concern of Network members, which has been expressed repeatedly over the past 14 years, is that too frequently, highly qualified, motivated, experienced transcribers in prison braille programs across the country do not continue transcribing braille following their release. Starting a business of any kind requires seed money to purchase hardware, software, and supplies, and to cover other operating expenses until revenue is produced. Building connections within the transcription industry is also critical for transcribers as they market their skills, as is the need for continuing education on braille code changes, advances in tactile graphic production, and much more.

In many instances, corrections policies prohibit relationships among prison staff and other former offenders once an inmate is released, severing ties with the braille network. Unfortunately, many offenders leaving prison after serving a long term do not have a support system or the funds needed to get a transcription operation up and running. Braille transcription is an ideal "cottage industry" and historically most transcribers have produced braille in their own homes or offices.

At this point, however, the field of vision is losing many highly experienced transcribers who want to continue transcribing upon release from prison, but simply don't have the resources to do so. APH staff coordinating the National Prison Braille Network continually receive requests for help from offenders who are either soon to be released or recently released and are eager and anxious to continue their transcription work on the outside. [See Attachment B.] Currently, there is no mechanism in place to provide the support these transcribers need.

Program Overview

During the pilot year of the Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program (FY2015), APH will identify and actively recruit up to six qualified transcribers from prison braille programs. They will come to Louisville for a period of time immediately following their release from prison -- estimated to be between two and six months. They will work at APH as braille transcriber apprentices while they receive the additional training, work experience, and networking opportunities necessary to establish successful independent transcription careers when they return to their home states. The level of training and work experience needed and the length of time each apprentice will work at APH will be determined on an individual basis. Continual evaluation of work skills will be conducted throughout the BTAP experience.

APH may decide to offer some of these transcribers full-time, regular employment, if the company has job openings for which they qualify. APH may also choose to negotiate with some transcribers to contract for their braille transcription services after they return home.

Apprentice Compensation

While in Louisville, braille transcriber apprentices will be paid the same rate that APH pays beginning transcribers (currently \$14.25 per hour). In addition, the program will cover expenses for travel to and from Louisville, an allowance for housing and transportation (for up to 2 months), and a daily stipend for meals and other essentials (for up to 30 days). Apprentices will not be eligible for benefits, such as health insurance.

The program mentor will help apprentices set up checking and savings accounts (if they have not done so already), and provide budget training as needed. Apprentices will

understand that when the daily stipend and monthly allowance periods end, they will be expected to cover their own expenses. They will be strongly encouraged to save as much of their salary as possible during the first two months of BTAP while this extra income helps them with living expenses.

Participation Eligibility

To qualify for this model reentry program, applicants must have...

- Participated in a prison braille program that is affiliated with the National Prison Braille Network. (Membership is free and open to all programs.)
- Earned Literary Braille Certification through the NLS (National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress).
- Preferably earned at least one advanced certification: Textbook Formatting, Literary Braille Proofreading, Nemeth Braille Code for Math and Science Notation, Nemeth Braille Proofreading, and Music.
- Preferably gained tactile graphics design and production experience.
- A commitment to pursuing a career in braille transcription.
- Motivation to learn all aspects of accessible media production, including electronic file manipulation.

Ideally, offenders still working in prison braille programs with between six months and one year remaining before parole or serve-out will be selected for the program. This will allow time to help participants gather their portfolio and make a smooth transition to APH. APH staff will work with inmate case workers and parole officers during this time to ensure that release requirements (if any) are fulfilled. Transcribers who meet other program criteria and have already been released from prison will also be considered.

Sex offenders will not be eligible to participate in the BTAP pilot initiative.

Application Process

While funding is currently available for only the pilot Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program in FY2015 (October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015), the APH Prison Braille Advisory Team will be working to secure additional funding to continue BTAP into the future. For that reason, two application categories have been established: Current and Future. **Current Applicants** will be considered for the FY2015 pilot initiative. Information on **Future Applicants** will be kept on file as potential candidates if BTAP continues. Data gathered from future applicants will assist with APH efforts to show the need for BTAP to continue. The primary difference between Current and Future Applicants is that Current Applicants have either already been released from prison, or have less than one year until their next parole board meeting or serve out date. Future Applicants have more than one year until their next parole board meeting or serve out date.

Both Current and Future Applicants must complete a BTAP Application Form and send it to APH. Current Applicants must also send several attachments along with the Application Form, as follows:

- A personal letter or essay explaining why they are applying for BTAP, including:
 - ✓ a description of their experience in the prison braille program,
 - ✓ what braille means to them,
 - ✓ their career goals,
 - ✓ challenges they will face to achieving these goals following release, and
 - ✓ resources available to them upon release to complete their goals.
- A resume or list of their transcription work in the braille program.
- A copy of each braille certificate earned.
- 3-5 samples of tactile graphics produced from masters that the transcriber created independently (if he/she produces tactile graphics).
- 5-10 pages of braille transcription work they have produced independently, along with print copies of these pages.
- At least two (but no more than five) letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a corrections professional (preferably the braille program manager) who can speak about the transcriber's conduct during incarceration and tenure in the braille program. If the applicant works or has worked with a vision professional who can attest to his/her braille production experience and transcription quality, a letter from that individual would be helpful.

Pilot Program Staffing

During the BTAP pilot year, an APH staff member who is highly qualified in braille and has considerable education and experience in the field of criminal justice will be re-assigned from her current position as Accessible Media Editor to spend approximately 10 hours each week mentoring apprentices and handling all "off work hours" issues, such as transportation, housing, and meeting parole requirements. APH's Coordinator of Braille Transcription Services and our liaison with KCI Braille Services prison braille program will oversee braille training once apprentices arrive at APH. These two professionals will work together to customize an "action plan" for each participant upon hire, projecting an approximate length of time that each will work at APH.

The APH Prison Braille Advisory Committee and Public Affairs staff managing the National Prison Braille Network will administer BTAP and provide support as needed to ensure that BTAP apprentices have the training, tools, and contacts they will need to establish successful careers.

Timeline: FY2015 (October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015)

The BTAP pilot program will be launched on October 15 at the National Prison Braille Forum. Application packets will be made available at that time, and staff will begin identifying and recruiting candidates. A preliminary report on the program will be produced in June, 2015.

Partners

APH partners with hundreds of professionals and organizations around the world each year to develop products, programs, and services that make life better for individuals with vision loss. Key to the success of BTAP is that we reach out to local, state, and national entities for both their expertise and their support.

On the national level, APH staff coordinating the National Prison Braille Network has worked for many years to keep both the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the U.S. Department of Education, Correctional Education Division, informed on the purpose and scope of prison braille programs. With our encouragement, the Department of Justice added "prison braille programs" to the list of programs eligible to receive federal funding through Second Chance Act grants, and two prison braille programs received grants through the 2008 funding cycle, totaling \$1.5 million. Officials with whom we communicate in these departments are extremely supportive of prison braille programs and have asked to be kept informed of related initiatives.

On the state level, Kentucky Department of Corrections Commissioner LaDonna Thompson is well-informed on prison braille programs and supports KCI (Kentucky Correctional Industries) Braille Services. APH has worked in partnership with the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women and Kentucky Correctional Industries to create and maintain this prison braille program since 2000. APH has subsequently hired four braille transcribers released from this program for full-time employment.

On the local level, we have established a working partnership with Prodigal Ministries, a non-profit agency that provides stability and support to former prisoners, helping them develop the community living skills and accountability that they need upon release to redirect their lives and become productive citizens. With three transitional houses for men and one for women in the Louisville area, Prodigal Ministries is partnering with APH on BTAP to make housing available for program participants, and to provide access to all transitional services that the agency provides (such as alcohol and drug counseling, assistance with parole requirements, access to clothing...). Prodigal Ministries works with many other non-profits across the region (clothes closets, food pantries, volunteer mentors...), and APH is working to secure their support for BTAP.

In addition to these resources, APH is a member of the Greater Louisville Reentry Coalition and has presented information on prison braille programs to this group. Member agencies have offered their services to help with reentry initiatives in the Louisville area.

Successful Outcomes

To ensure a positive experience for transcribers and a positive return on investment for APH, pre- and post-program testing will be conducted with all apprentices. Two separate checklists will be developed -- one for technical skills (braille, computer and software), and one for "soft skills" (time management, work ethic, personal budgeting...). These checklists will be completed with each individual apprentice to customize goals and objectives, and to establish a timeframe for completion of the program.

What will ultimately determine the success of BTAP is whether or not APH successfully adds knowledgeable, productive professionals to the braille transcription workforce across the country. We would prefer to add these experts to our team - either here at APH or as long-distance contract workers. However, if participants in the program successfully complete goals and objectives and end up producing braille for individuals or agencies other than APH after returning home, we will consider the program successful at building these transcription careers since they will further advance opportunities for people with vision loss to read and learn.

APH National Prison Braille Advisory Committee and BTAP Development Team

Nancy Lacewell, Chair

Director of Government and Community Affairs

National Prison Braille Network Coordinator

BTAP Coordinator

1839 Frankfort Avenue

Louisville, KY 40206

Toll free: 800-223-1839 ext. 339

Direct: 502-899-2339

Email: nlacewell@aph.org

Becky Snider, Public Affairs Coordinator, National Prison Braille Network Administrator, and BTAP Administrator

Jayma Hawkins, Accessible Media Editor and BTAP Apprentice Mentor

Gary Mudd, Vice President of Public Affairs

Bob Brasher, Vice President of Advisory Services and Research

Vicki Buns, Vice President of Human Resources

Jan Carroll, Director of Braille Transcription Services

Jane Thompson, Director of Accessible Textbooks

Dawn Wilkins, Braille Pre-Production Manager

ATTACHMENT A
Data Gathered from Survey of Prison Braille Programs in the U.S.
August 2014

Number of Prison Braille Programs sent the survey [Total number of known programs at this time.]	33
Number of programs that have responded to date [91% of known programs participated in survey]	30
Total inmate capacity for these programs	867
Total inmates currently in programs	626 *
Total braille transcribers in programs	332
Number eligible for BTAP who will serve out or be up for parole in 2014-2015	46 **
" " " " in 2016	17
" " " " in 2017	9
Total numbers of transcribers who have been released from prison within the past 3 years (since 2011) who are eligible for BTAP	109 **

Prison Braille Program Recidivism Rates

These questions were asked of all prisons:

To your knowledge...

How many inmates who participated in your prison braille program and earned NLS Literary Braille Certification have been released from prison?	310
How many of these released inmates are now transcribing Braille (either full time or part time) on the outside?	88 (28%)
How many of these released inmates have reoffended and returned to prison?	15 (4.8%)

** This number includes all inmates in the program, including those who do not learn braille. They may produce tactile graphics only, manage production schedule or bookkeeping, package and ship braille materials..., but they are not on track at this time to become full-time transcribers.*

*** These 155 transcribers are potential candidates for the BTAP pilot initiative.*



American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.



ATTACHMENT B

APH staff coordinating the National Prison Braille Network (NPBN) continually receive letters from inmates in prison braille programs. Most often, these inmates request our help to continue transcribing braille following their release. Here are some excerpts:

+++++

I am currently incarcerated at the Nebraska State Penitentiary and have been employed by Prose and Cons Braille since 7/9/07. I have certifications in Literary, Nemeth, Literary Proofreading, UEB (Unified English Braille) through Canada, and am currently working on the Braille Formats certification. ... I have a parole hearing in October of 2015 and am trying to get as much information as possible to lay my braille plans out to the Parole Board and whomever will be my assigned Parole Officer. I am trying to get an idea of what help is available to me to become a successful braille transcriber before release so I can more accurately make plans and set goals. ...My ultimate goal is to eventually open my own family owned and operated braille shop in my home town of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

I am an efficient and accurate brailist. I work hard and take pride in the braille I produce....Any information you can supply to give me some direction into the above matters would be greatly appreciated by myself and my family.

James; NE State Penitentiary; Prose and Cons Braille Program; June, 2014

+++++

I am writing you as well as various other organizations for braille employment information. I am a certified brailist. As you can tell from my address I am currently a guest of the state of Missouri. However, it is almost certain my case will be turned over quite soon. I anticipate being home in 2014.

I am a Library of Congress certified Brailist. I formatted textbooks for 3 years before moving into the QC department where I check braille. I have also studied the National Braille Association's Textbook Formatting course, though I have not taken the test. I have done all this work through the Center for Braille and Narration Production in Jefferson City.

Ideally I would like to work from home if at all possible. However, if the pay and benefits are good I will relocate. I have other options as I am a boat builder with much experience in the custom fiber glass field. Furthermore, I build and design automobiles and do home renovations. I have owned businesses in all these areas before my incarceration.

Continued on page 10

I would like to do braille though. Because I largely do textbooks I like knowing that I am helping give the blind a chance to learn as well as the sighted students. this speaks to the educator in me as I was also a tutor for as long as I've been a braillist... Thank you for any information you can provide me.

**Willy; Jefferson City (MO) Correctional Center, Center for Braille and Narration
Production; May, 2012**

+++++

I am currently incarcerated at the Idaho Correctional Center in Boise, Idaho. I am certified in Literary Braille and I am currently working on my Textbook Formatting certification, which I hope to complete by the end of this year. At that point, I plan to undertake a proofreading course of study.

I am writing today to ask what help is available, if any, through APH, for inmates to help get them back on their feet after they get out. I'm starting to think about what will happen when I get out in 2012 and to be frank, it's a little scary.

Also, what qualifications do you look for when you consider a prospective employee? What could I be doing to make myself more hireable? ... I eagerly look forward to hearing back from you.

Eric; Idaho Correctional Center; ICC Braille Transcription Center; March, 2010

+++++

I am currently an inmate at Miami Correctional Facility in Indiana, home of MAMP (Miami Accessible Media Project). I am a certified braille transcriber with experience in textbook and Promising Practices (K-3). I am extremely computer literate and fully understand NIMAS code and the programming to transform the code into braille, large print, and accessible PDF's.

Now, I have explained who I am, let me explain why I am writing. I am currently working on a sentence modification, trying to get out early. It would greatly improve my chances of success if I could get a letter from you showing you're willing to contract transcription work to me. After I get established, I intend on starting a small company providing multi-media transcription services and a wide range of other products for the visually impaired. ... I will eagerly await your reply.

Carl; Miami (IN) Correctional Facility; Miami Accessible Media Project; July, 2010



American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.



Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program (BTAP)

FY2015 Pilot Program

Eligibility Criteria and Application Process

Thank you for your interest in the Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program's FY2015 Pilot Program, which will operate from October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015. To be considered for this apprentice program, please review the Eligibility Criteria below carefully. If you meet these criteria, determine which application category applies to you (Current or Future) and follow the application directions.

BTAP Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for this model reentry program, applicants must have...

- Participated in a prison braille program that is affiliated with the National Prison Braille Network. (Membership is free and open to all programs.)
- Earned Literary Braille Certification through the NLS (National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress).
- Preferably earned at least one advanced certification: Textbook Formatting, Literary Braille Proofreading, Nemeth Braille, Nemeth Braille Proofreading, or Music.
- Preferably gained tactile graphics design and production experience.
- A commitment to pursuing a career in braille transcription.
- Motivation to learn all aspects of accessible media production, including electronic file manipulation.

Ideally, offenders still working in prison braille programs with between six months and one year remaining before parole or serve-out will be selected for the program. This will allow time to help participants make a smooth transition to APH. APH staff will work with inmate case workers and parole officers during this time to ensure that release requirements (if any) are fulfilled. Transcribers who meet other program criteria and have already been released from prison will also be considered. Sex offenders will not be eligible to participate in the BTAP pilot initiative.

BTAP Application Process

APH is currently accepting applications in two categories: Current and Future.

Current Applicants

These individuals have either already been released from prison, or have **less than one year remaining** before their next parole board meeting or serve out date. They must send to APH a completed Application Form, along with all attachments requested below:

- A personal letter or essay explaining why you are applying for BTAP. Include:
 - ✓ a description of your experience in the prison braille program,
 - ✓ what braille means to you,
 - ✓ your career goals,
 - ✓ challenges you face to achieving these goals following release, and
 - ✓ resources available to you upon release to complete your goals.
- A resume or list of your transcription work in the braille program.
- A copy of each braille certificate received.
- 3-5 samples of tactile graphics produced from masters that you created independently (if you produce tactile graphics).
- 5-10 pages of braille transcription work you produced independently, along with print copies of these pages.
- At least two (but no more than five) letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a corrections professional (preferably the braille program manager) who can speak about your conduct during incarceration and your tenure in the braille program. If you have worked with a vision professional who can attest to your braille production experience and transcription quality, a letter from this individual would be helpful.

People writing letters of recommendations can send them to APH separately from the application if they prefer. They should include the full name of the Current Applicant, and send letters to Nancy Lacewell at the address below.

Current Applicants will not be considered for BTAP until their entire application packet has been received (completed Application Form, and **all requested attachments**). APH will contact Current Applicants within one month of receiving their completed packet to discuss their individual status as a BTAP candidate.

Future Applicants

These individuals are currently working in prison braille programs and hope to be considered for the BTAP program in the future, if it is funded beyond the pilot year (FY2015). They have more than one year remaining before their next parole board meeting or serve out date. Future Applicants should send to APH a completed Application Form, but they do not need to send along the attachments requested for Current Applicants. However, these transcribers are encouraged to begin developing their application packet.

APH will contact Future Applicants within one month of receiving their application to confirm receipt.

All applications and packets should be mailed to:

Nancy Lacewell
BTAP Application
American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206

Questions should be directed to a member of the BTAP Implementation Team:

Nancy Lacewell, BTAP Coordinator

Phone: 502-899-2339; or 800-223-1839 ext. 339

Email: nlacewell@aph.org

Becky Snider, BTAP Administrator

Phone: 502-899-2356; or 800-223-1839 ext. 356

Email: rsnider@aph.org

Jayma Hawkins, BTAP Apprentice Mentor

Phone: 502-899-2372; or 800-223-1839 ext. 372

Email: jhawkins@aph.org





American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.



National Prison
Braille Network

Braille Transcriber Apprentice Program (BTAP)

FY2015 Pilot Program

(October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015)

Application

Please print out, complete, and mail application to APH as instructed on last page.

[Use the blank page on the back if you need additional space.]

Date _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Prison ID Number _____ Phone Number _____

Mailing Address _____

Name of Correctional Institution _____

Name of Prison Braille Program _____

Release Date (*if already released*) _____

A. Please read carefully and check the appropriate box for your situation now:

Current Applicant

- ☐ I have either already been released from prison (date noted above), **or**
- ☐ I have **less than one year remaining** before my next parole board meeting or serve out date. I have read the BTAP Eligibility Requirements and I believe that I qualify for this pilot program. I am sending to APH a completed application, **along with all attachments requested**. I understand that APH will contact me within one month of receiving my completed application and attachments to discuss my status as a BTAP candidate.

Signature of Applicant _____

Future Applicant

- ☐ I am currently participating in a prison braille program and I have **more than one year remaining** before my next parole board meeting or serve out date. I am sending to APH a completed application form **without the attachments requested**. I understand that when I have less than one year remaining before my next parole board meeting or serve out date, and if BTAP is still operational, I must resubmit an updated application and send it, along with all attachments requested to APH in order to be considered a Current Applicant. APH will confirm receiving my application within one month of receipt.

Signature of Applicant _____

B. Contacts

If you have not yet been released and we cannot reach you directly, who should we call? For example, a professional working within the prison as braille program manager, caseworker, vision professional...

Primary Contact

Name _____

Title _____

Mailing address _____

Email _____ Phone (____) _____

Secondary contact

Name _____

Title _____

Mailing address _____

Email _____ Phone (____) _____

C. Status and Availability

Current Charge(s): _____

Brief description of the crime(s): _____

Length of sentence: _____ Date sentence began: _____

Number of times you have appeared before the parole board on present sentence:

Next parole board hearing scheduled (date): _____

Anticipated release/serve out date: _____

Following release, will you be restricted in any way that could impact braille transcription efforts (such as, not allowed to use computers)? If so, please explain.

Additional information about your release that may be helpful to program planners:

D. Education (not related to Braille)

Highest grade completed: _____

Diplomas/degrees/certificates received:

Additional education programs and years completed: _____

Other programs of any type that you have participated in while incarcerated to prepare for release: _____

Computer software programs you are familiar with: _____

_____**E. Work Experience (not related to Braille)**

Jobs held while incarcerated:

Jobs held prior to incarceration, and dates of employment:

Position: _____

Company/Location: _____

Dates (month/year): from ____ / ____ to ____ / ____

Position: _____

Company/Location: _____

Dates (month/year): from ____ / ____ to ____ / ____

F. Braille Transcription Qualifications

Date you joined the prison braille program: _____

Certifications you have earned and dates completed:

_____ NLS Literary Braille	Date: _____
_____ NLS Literary Braille Proofreading	_____
_____ NLS Nemeth Braille	_____
_____ NLS Nemeth Braille Proofreading	_____
_____ NLS Music Braille	_____
_____ NBA Textbook Formatting	_____

Other braille certifications earned and dates completed:

Certification work in process (i.e., *Nemeth Code, Lesson 12*):

Computer programs used in braille transcription: _____

OR: _____ I produced braille primarily with a braillewriter

G. Tactile Graphics Experience

Check the level that best describes your tactile graphics experience:

- _____ Novice - I know very little about tactile graphics design and production.
- _____ Intermediate - I learned the basics of tactile graphics design and production.
- _____ Advanced - I have a lot of experience designing and producing tactile graphics using various media.
- _____ Expert - I am confident that I can design and produce all types of tactile graphics with little direction from others.

Approximately how many tactile graphics masters have you created: _____

What processes have you used to create tactile graphics (such as collage, computer generated, Tiger...)? _____

What software have you used to create graphics (such as Corel Draw)?

Check areas of additional training and/or experience you would like to pursue:

Textbook formatting

Tactile graphics

Operating an independent braille business

Marketing braille services

UEB (Unified English Braille Code)

List all other areas in which you hope to improve your braille-related skills:

I. Explain why you are an ideal candidate for the Braille Transcribers Apprentice Program (BTAP):

Please mail completed application to:

Nancy Lacewell, Public Affairs

BTAP Application

American Printing House for the Blind

1839 Frankfort Ave

Louisville KY 40206

BTAP

Braille Transcribers Apprentice Program

A model reentry initiative to transition
braille transcribers into the workforce

Braille Transcription Apprentice Program

Request for Letters of Support

The Braille Transcription Apprentice Program (BTAP) assists former offenders who earned national braille transcription certifications during their incarceration by providing job skills training and resources as they transition into a career in Braille Transcription upon their release from prison.

This pilot program is currently funded through fiscal year 2015 (October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015). **To sustain the program, the American Printing House for the Blind will seek financial support from grant foundations.** Our success in securing funds is dependent upon the support of others who could benefit from this program or the professionals who work with them.

We ask that current and former prison braille program participants, program administrators, wardens, and vision professionals associated with these programs write letters explaining why this program is needed.

Letters may include the following information:

- ***Your experience with a prison braille program.***
Name of the prison and braille program, year you joined the program, certifications you have earned or taught, other accomplishments in the program, impact that braille or the prison braille program have had on you or those you work with.
- ***Your experience after release in regards to Braille Transcription.***
Story of your transition, including challenges, resources and support you needed, achievements...
- ***Why you believe a program like BTAP is needed.***
For example, it provides training in soft skills (time management, communication...), networking opportunities, resources for career success...
- ***How you believe BTAP can make a positive impact in your life and the lives of others.***

Please keep in mind that foundation board members will be moved by personal stories of challenges and accomplishments.

Letters should be dated and addressed, "To whom it may concern."

Handwritten letters and emails are fine. When appropriate, please use letterhead. Send letters via U.S. Postal Service or email them to:

Nancy Lacewell
American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
nlacewell@aph.org



American Printing House
for the Blind, Inc.

THANK YOU!



2013 Tactile Learning Video: Viewer Responses

There are never an adequate amount of words to express how **Braille is so life changing**. Though, as I viewed the video it renewed my desire to learn more so that all Braille Readers will be provided an accurate and concise transcription. The children showed us that Braille may be ever changing, but the beauty of it stands endlessly.

To think we
might have even
a small part in
the advancement
of their
education was
humbling.

Taken from letters written by the transcribers of the Mountain View Unit-Braille Facility.

WRIGHTSVILLE STATE PRISON

WRIGHTSVILLE, ARKANSAS



Program: Wrightsville Braille Project

Established: 1984

Operated by: Arkansas School for the Blind
Instructional Resource Center



WRIGHTSVILLE BRAILLE PROJECT

WRIGHTSVILLE, ARKANSAS

CURRENT: 3 BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS





WRIGHTSVILLE BRAILLE PROJECT

WRIGHTS, ARKANSAS

Warden Dexter Payne on a visit to the program.





WRIGHTSVILLE BRAILLE PROJECT

WRIGHTSVILLE, ARKANSAS



CURRENT CHALLENGE:
When you are miles away
and the inmates are without
internet access, how do you
make sure transcribers are
kept up-to-date with their
training... especially as it
pertains to UEB?





WRIGHTSVILLE BRAILLE PROJECT

WRIGHTSVILLE, ARKANSAS



Photos by: Chevy Moore, a student at the
Arkansas School for the Blind.





CENTRAL STATE PRISON MACON, GEORGIA



Program: Georgia Braille Transcribers

Established: 2003

Operated by: Prison Education

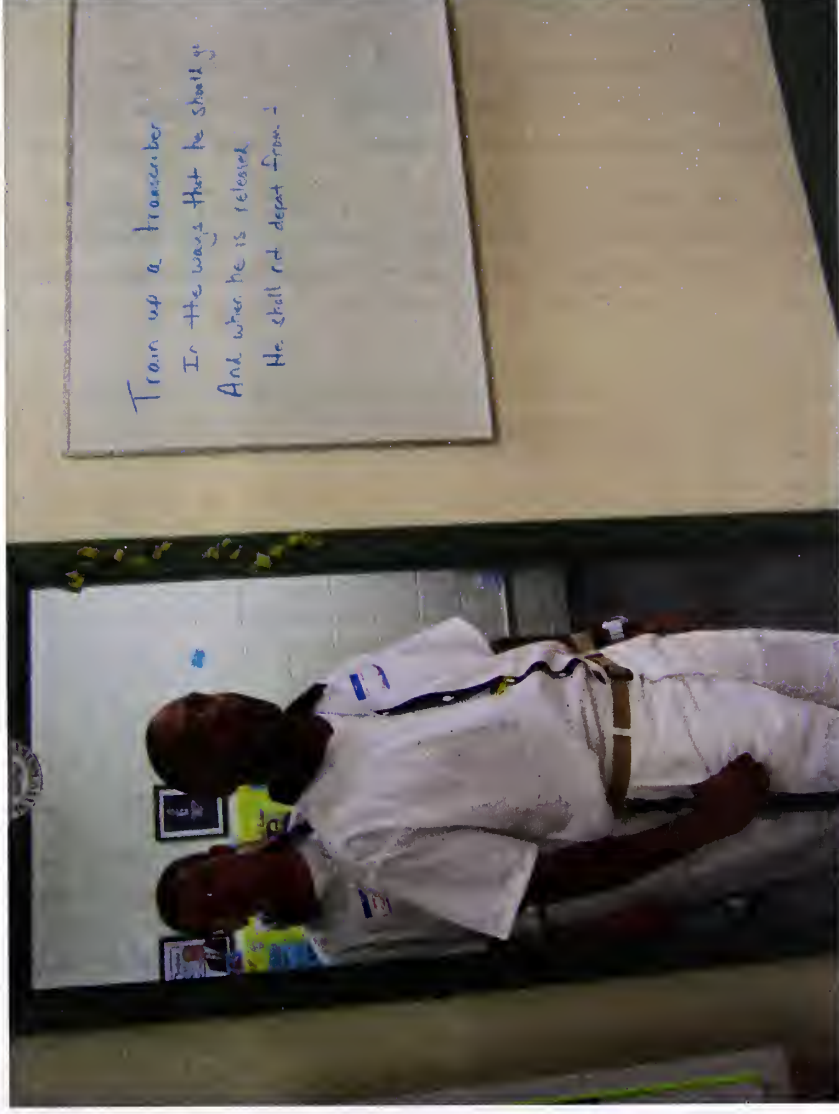
Partner: Georgia Instructional Materials Center



GEORGIA BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS

MACON, GEORGIA

CURRENT: 18 Braille Transcribers



*Train up a transcriber in the ways that he should go
And when he is released he shall not depart from it*

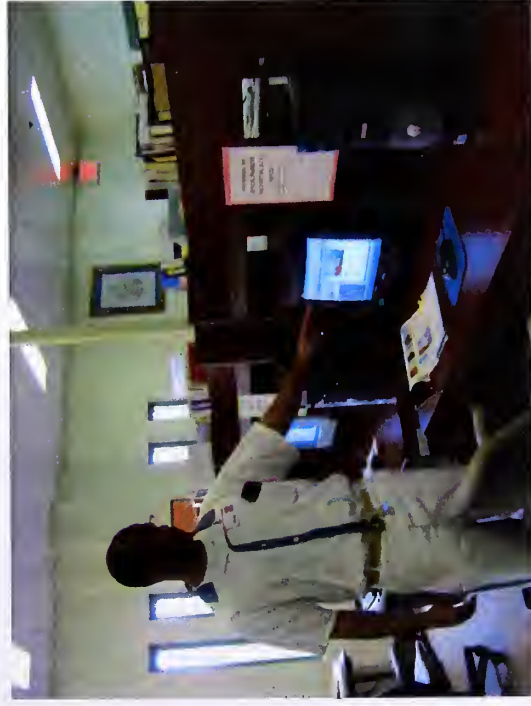




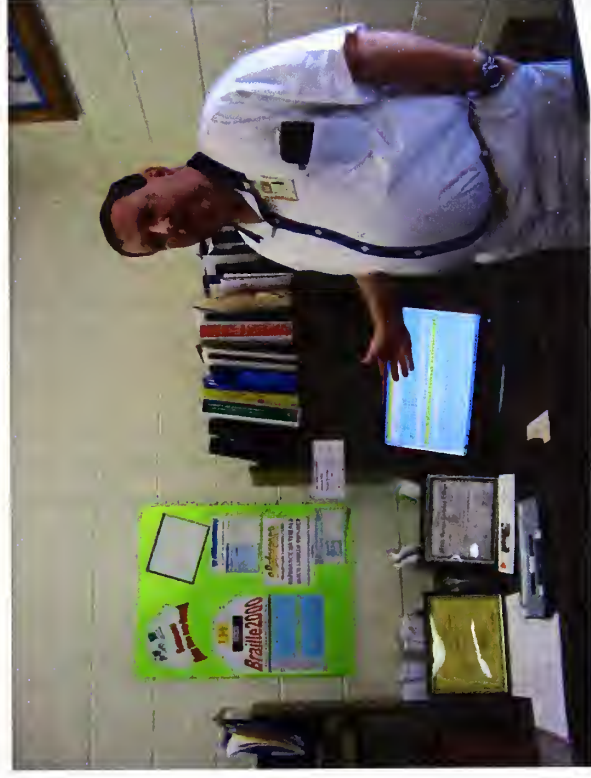
GEORGIA BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS

MACON, GEORGIA

Optical Character Recognition Process



Braille Software and Resources





GEORGIA BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS

MACON, GEORGIA

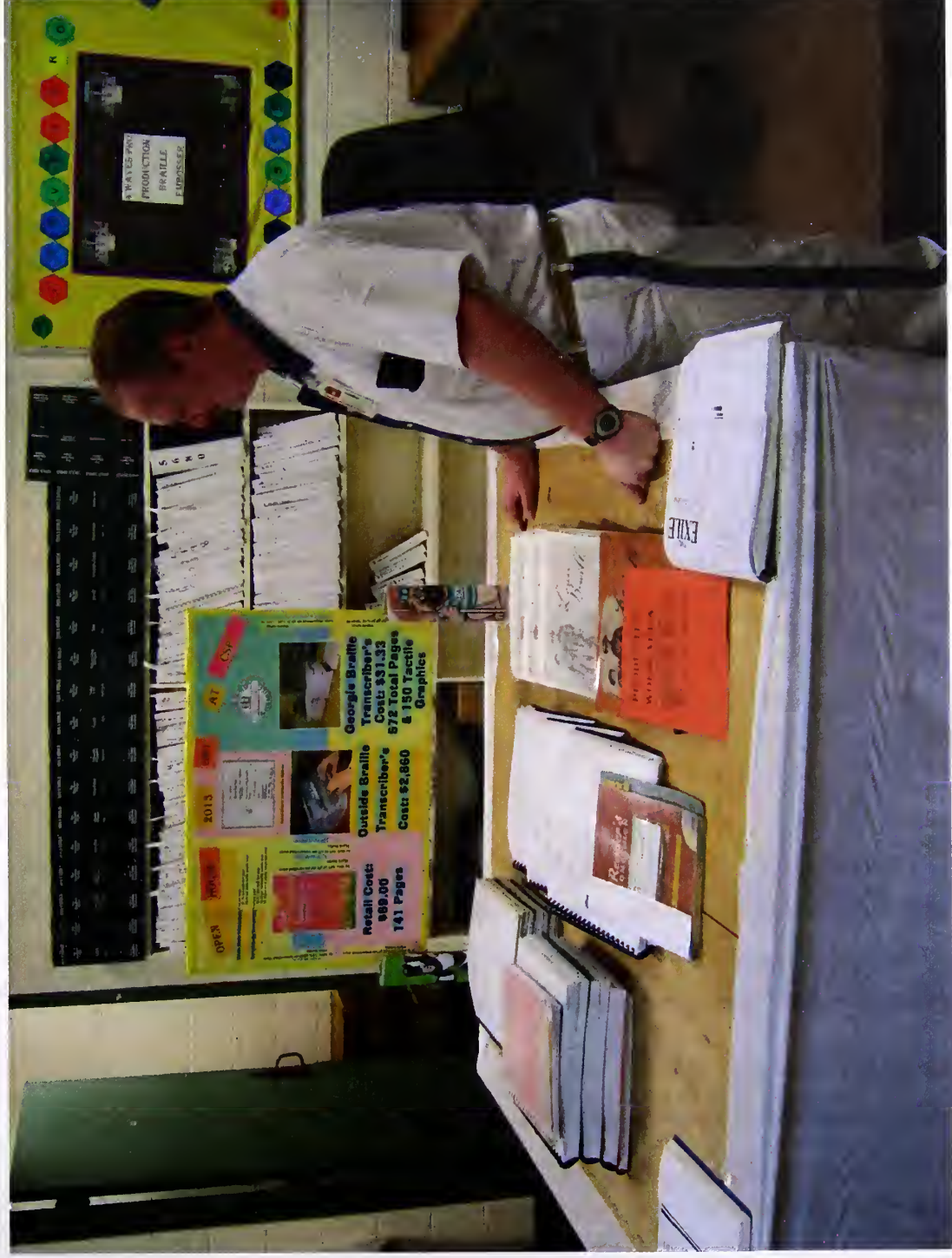
Tactile Graphic: “Place Hand Here”





GEORGIA BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS

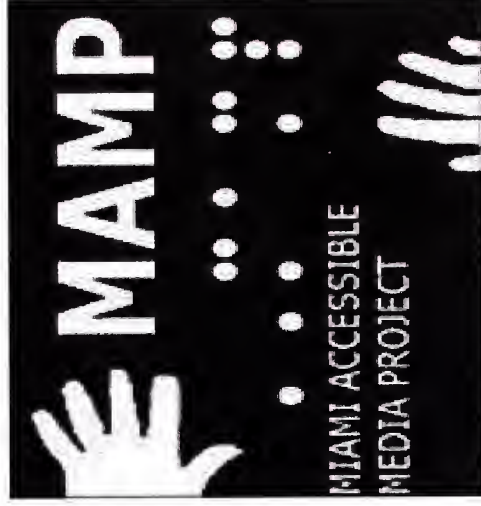
MACON, GEORGIA





MIAMI CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

BUNKER HILL, INDIANA



Program:

MAMP-Miami Accessible Media Project

Established:

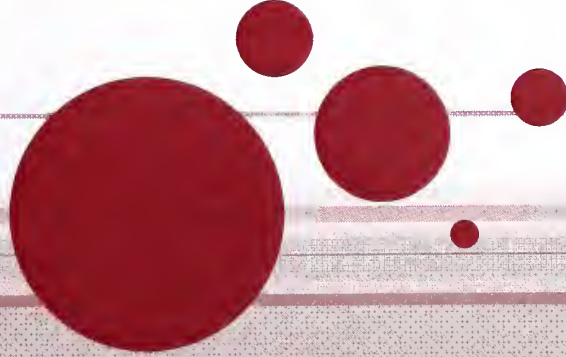
2008

Operated by:

Prison Education & Corrections Industry

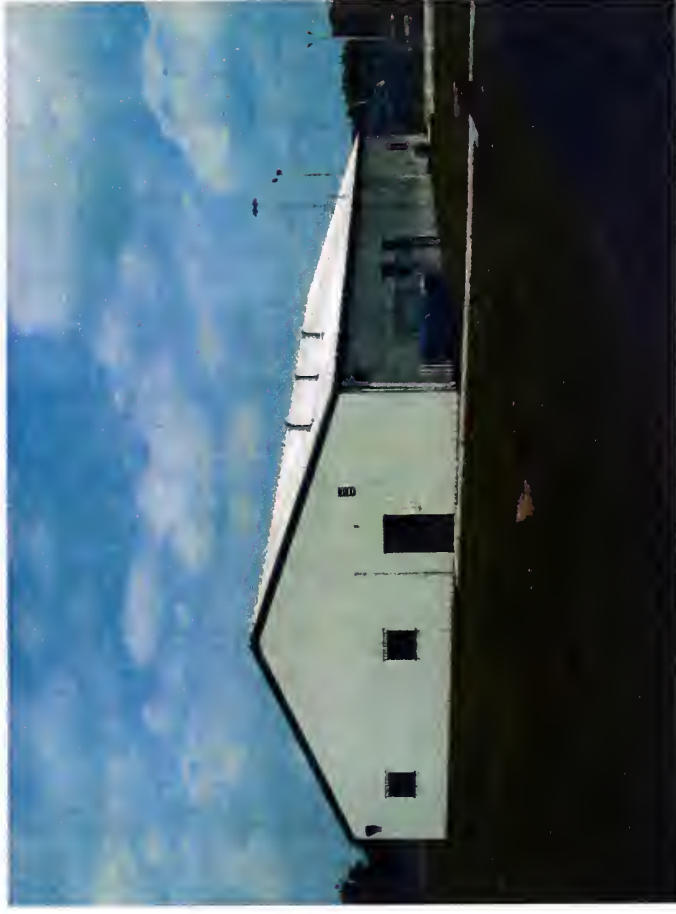
Partner:

Indiana Instructional Resource Center





G. ROBERT COTTON CORRECTIONAL FACILITY JACKSON, MICHIGAN



Program: Michigan Braille Transcribing Fund (MBTF)
Established: 1962
Operated by: Nonprofit Corporation

THE JOURNAL OF THE

MICHIGAN BRAILLE TRANSCRIBING FUND

JACKSON, MICHIGAN

CURRENT: 29 Braille Transcribers
45 inmates in program





MICHIGAN BRAILLE TRANSCRIBING FUND

JACKSON, MICHIGAN

○ Workstation





MICHIGAN BRAILLE TRANSCRIBING FUND

JACKSON, MICHIGAN

- The Braillo embossers





MICHIGAN BRAILLE TRANSCRIBING FUND JACKSON, MICHIGAN

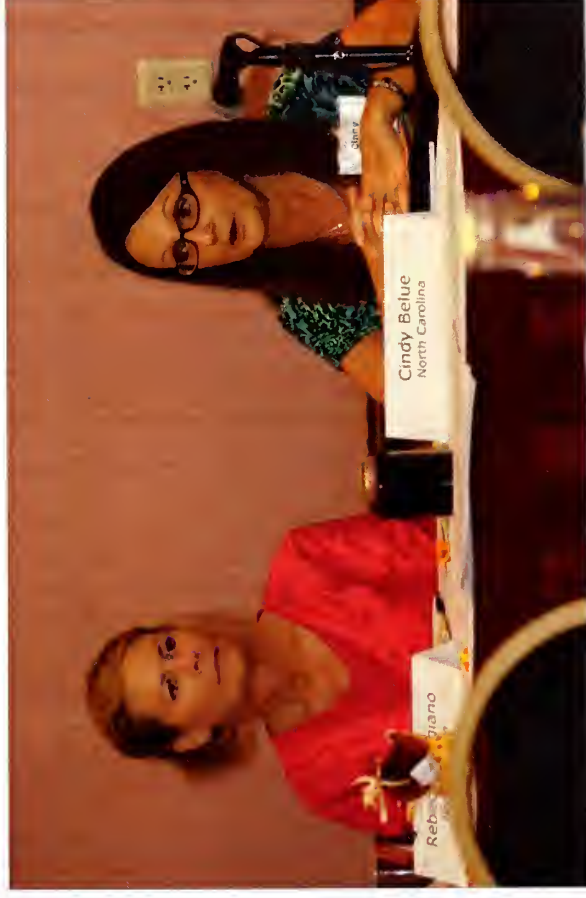
- Master Library and Binding Area





SCOTLAND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

LAURINBURG, NORTH CAROLINA



Program: NC Braille Transcription Services

Established: 2010

Operated by: NC Department of Public Safety

Partners: NC Department of Public Instruction &
Richmond Community College



NC BRAILLE TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES

LAURINBURG, NORTH CAROLINA

CURRENT: 21 Braille Transcribers





GRAFTON CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

GRAFTON, OHIO



Program:

Grafton Braille Service Center

Established:

1991

Operated by:

Ohio Penal Industries (OPI)

Partner:

**Center for Instructional Supports &
Accessible Media (CISAM)**

GRAFTON BRAILLE SERVICE CENTER

CURRENT: 23 OPI WORKERS
22 VOLUNTEER STUDENTS





GRAFTON BRAILLE SERVICE CENTER

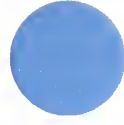
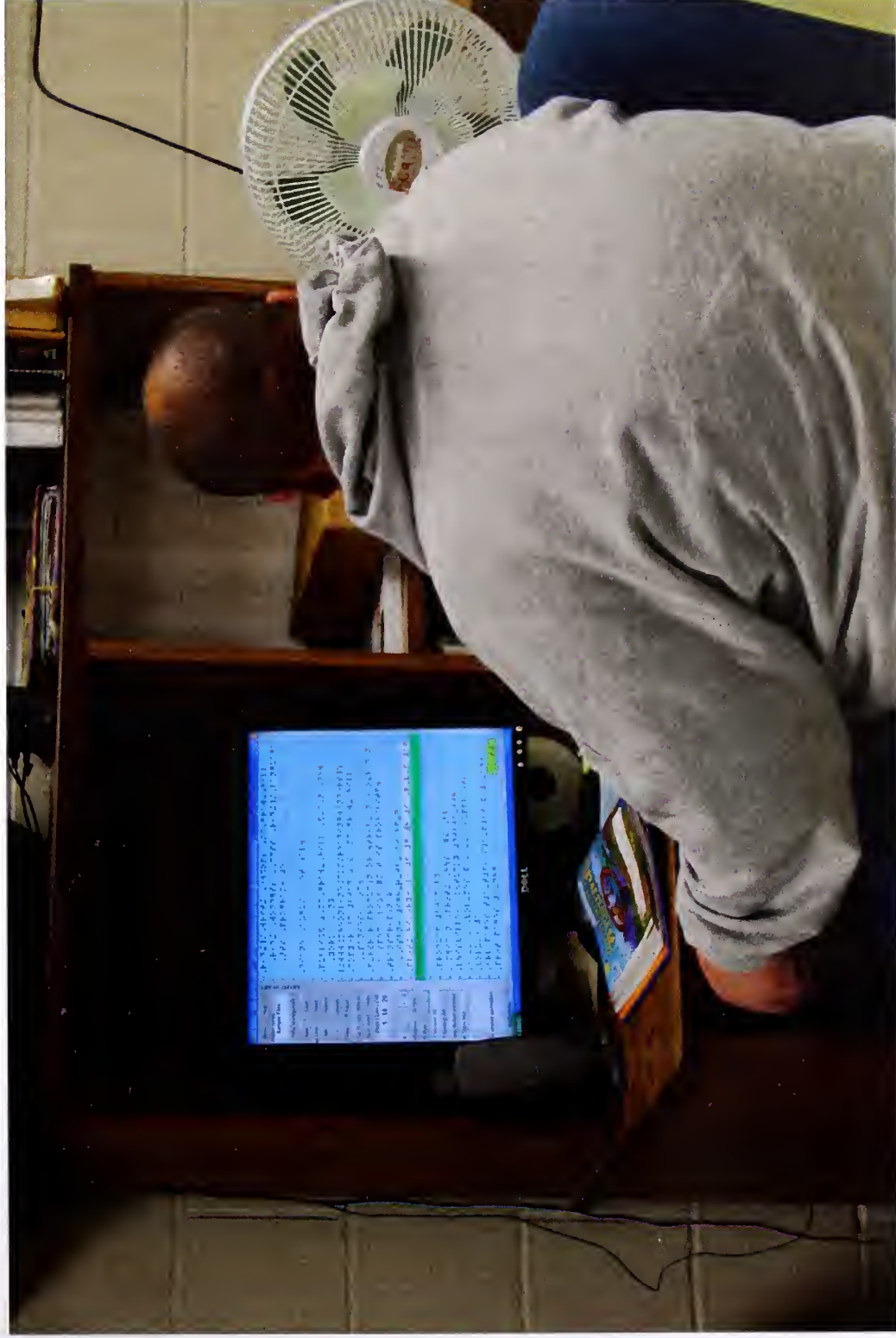
GRAFTON, OHIO





GRAFTON BRAILLE SERVICE CENTER

GRAFTON, OHIO





GRAFTON BRAILLE SERVICE CENTER

GRAFTON, OHIO





LEATH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA

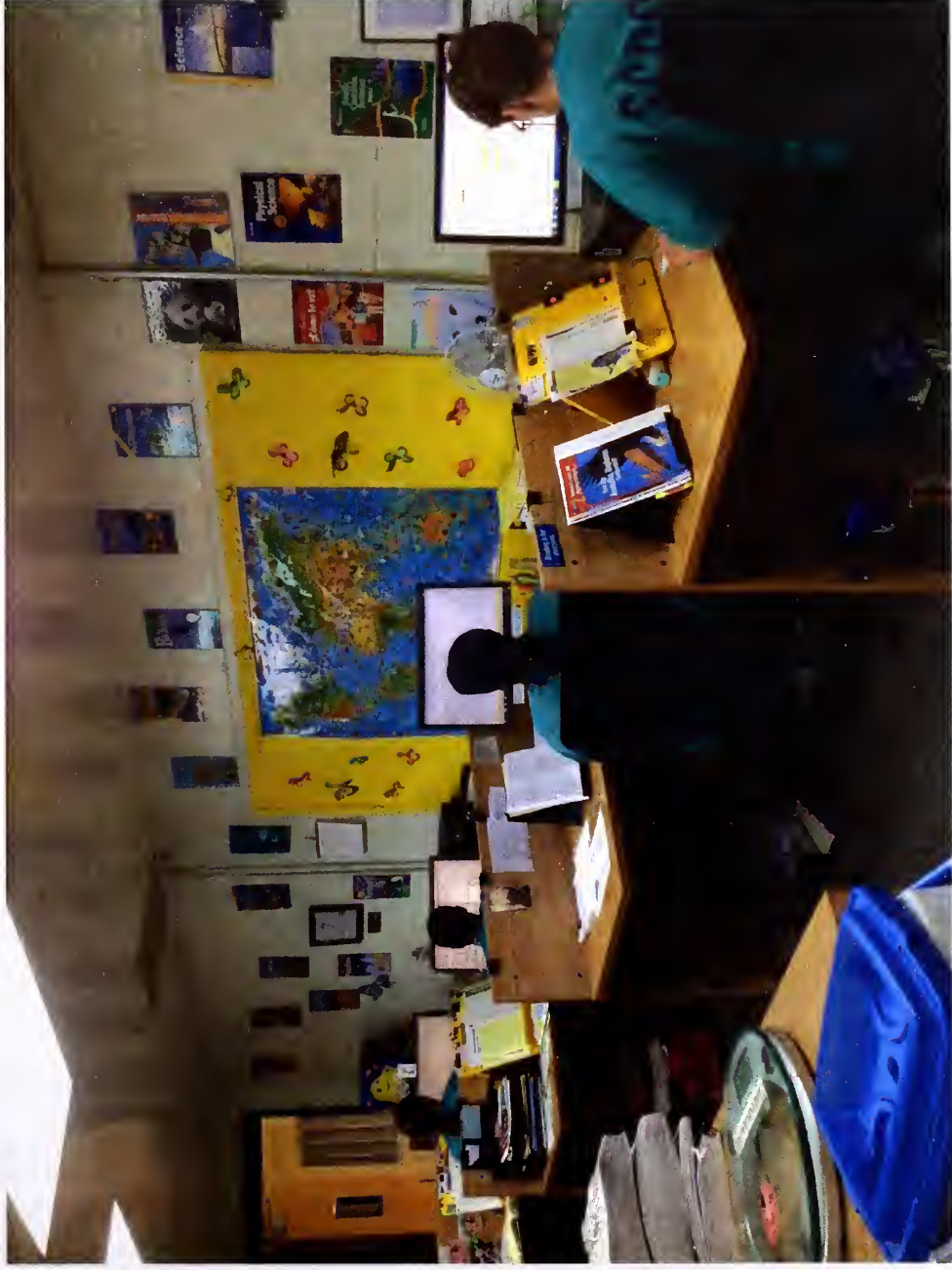


Program: South Carolina Braille Production Center
Established: 2002
Operated by: Prison Education



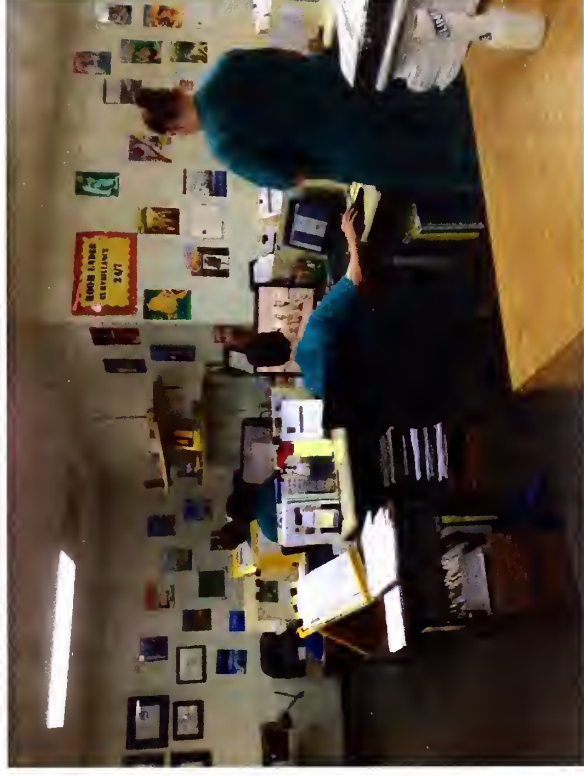
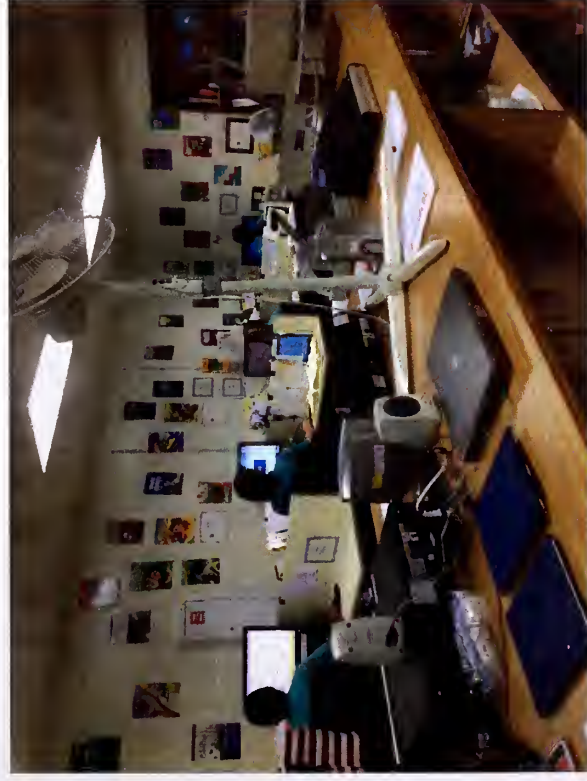
SOUTH CAROLINA BRAILLE PRODUCTION CENTER GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA

CURRENT: 13 FULL TIME BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS



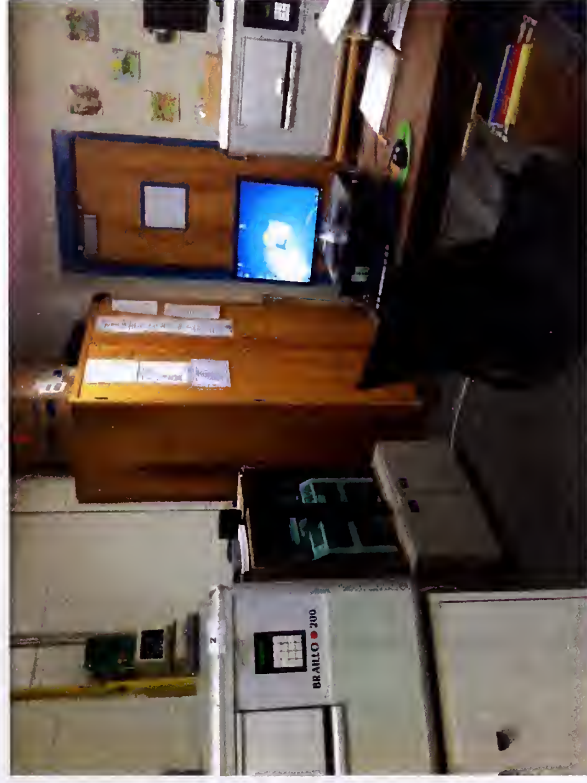
SOUTH CAROLINA BRAILLE PRODUCTION CENTER GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA

CAPACITY: 13 WITH PLANS TO EXPAND TO 16



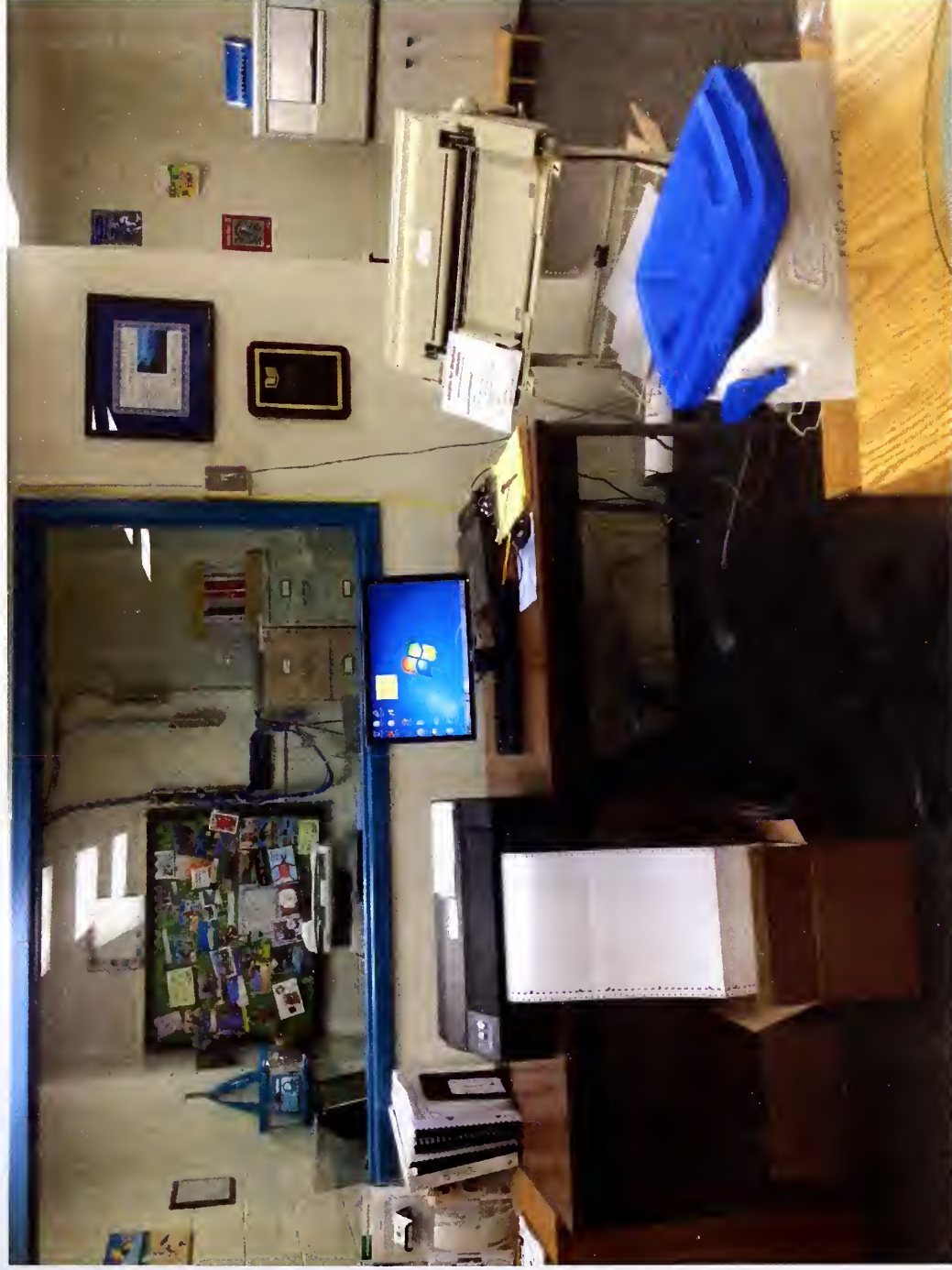


SOUTH CAROLINA BRAILLE PRODUCTION CENTER GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA





SOUTH CAROLINA BRAILLE PRODUCTION CENTER GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA





MOUNTAIN VIEW UNIT

GATESVILLE, TEXAS



Program: Mountain View Braille

Established: 1999

Operated by: Prison Education & Corrections Industry



MOUNTAIN VIEW BRAILLE GATESVILLE, TEXAS

- Workshop led by Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC)



MOUNTAIN VIEW BRAILLE GATESVILLE, TEXAS

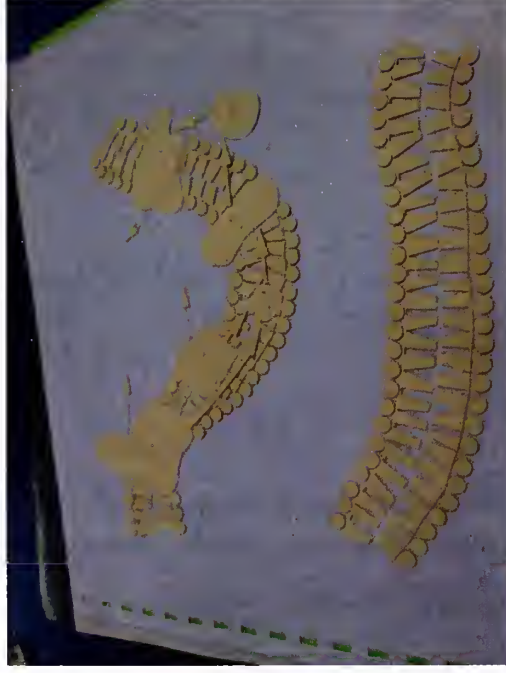
- o Tactile graphics production area



MOUNTAIN VIEW BRAILLE GATESVILLE, TEXAS



Digital tactile graphics



Collage tactile graphics





MOUNTAIN VIEW BRAILLE

GATESVILLE, TEXAS

- o Classroom setting





WASHINGTON CORRECTIONS CENTER FOR WOMEN GIG HARBOR



Program: *Washington State Braille Services Team*
Established: 1997
Operated by: *Washington State School for the Blind*



WASHINGTON STATE BRAILLE SERVICES TEAM

CURRENT: 18 FULL TIME BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS





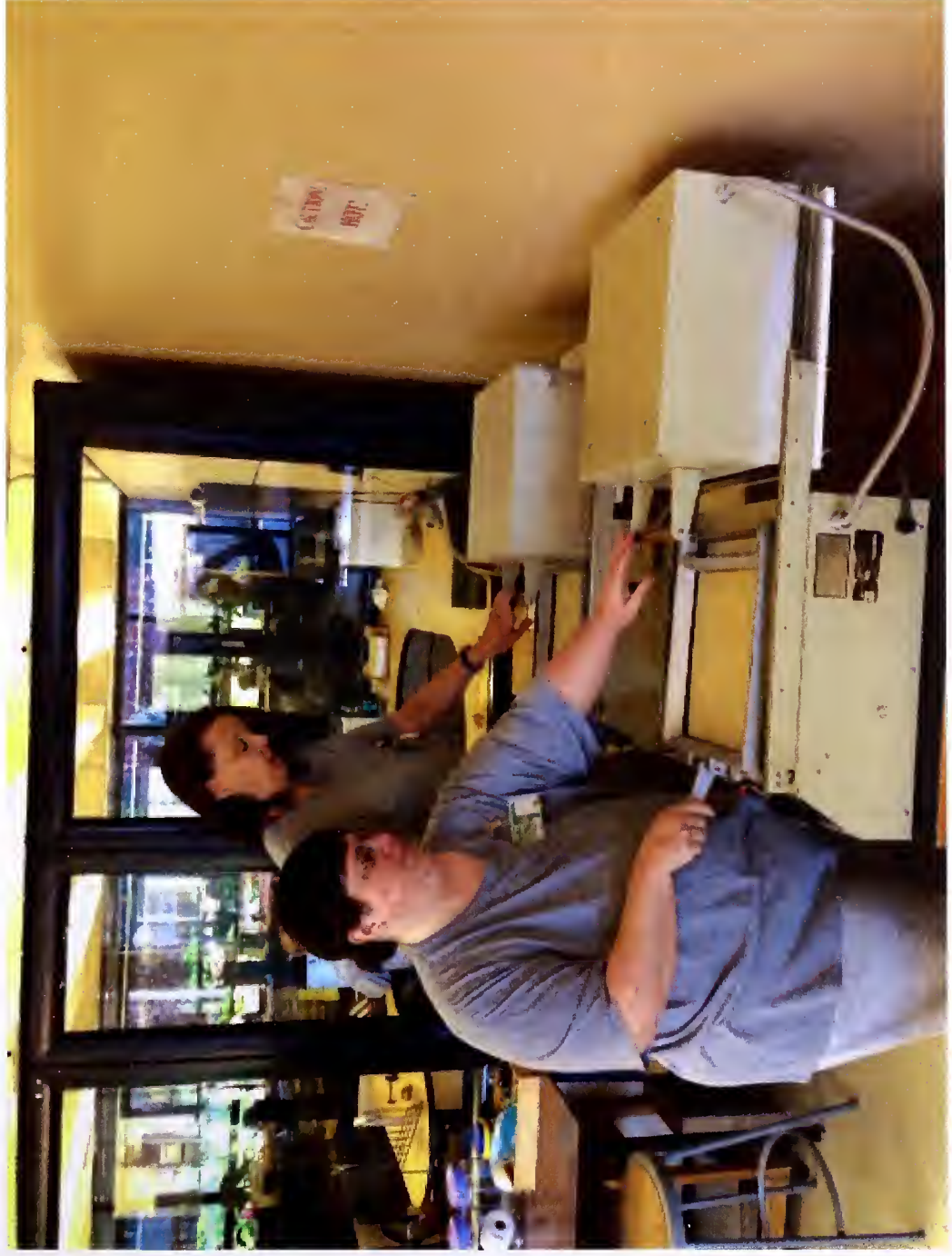
WASHINGTON STATE BRAILLE SERVICES TEAM

TACTILE GRAPHICS





THERMOFORMING





UEB STUDIES



WASHINGTON STATE BRAILLE SERVICES TEAM

- Current Challenge:

Washington State will now only allow programming for a maximum of 7 years. Do other institutions have this limitation?





OSHKOSH CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN



Program: OSCI Braille
Established: 1997
Operated by: Prison Education
Partner: Wisconsin Braille

OSCI BRAILLE
OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN

CURRENT: 18 BRAILLE TRANSCRIBERS



OSCI BRAILLE

OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN



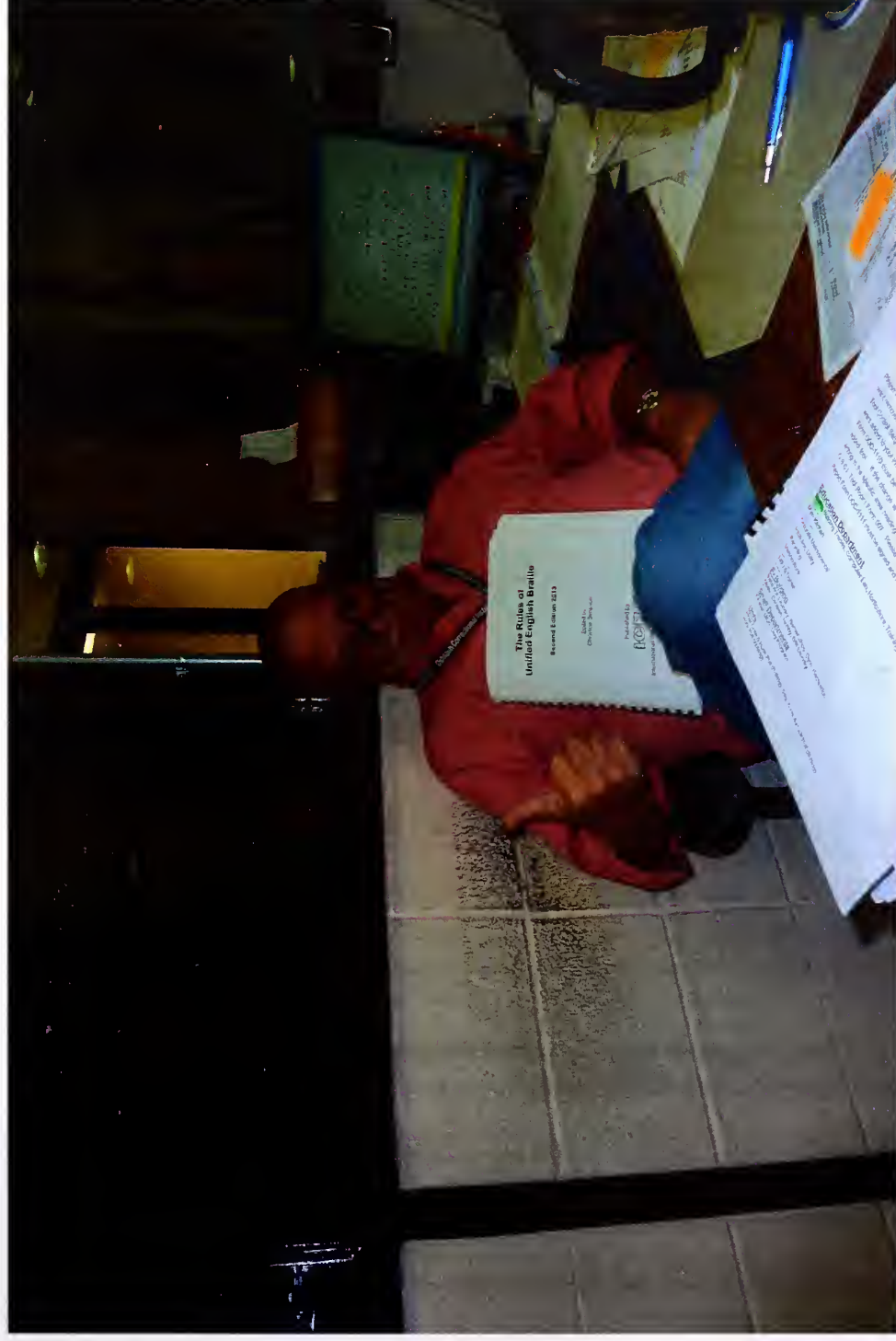
OSCI BRAILLE
OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN
EMBOSSER STATION





OSCI BRAILLE
OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN

GETTING UEB READY



WYOMING MEDIUM CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION TORRINGTON, WYOMING

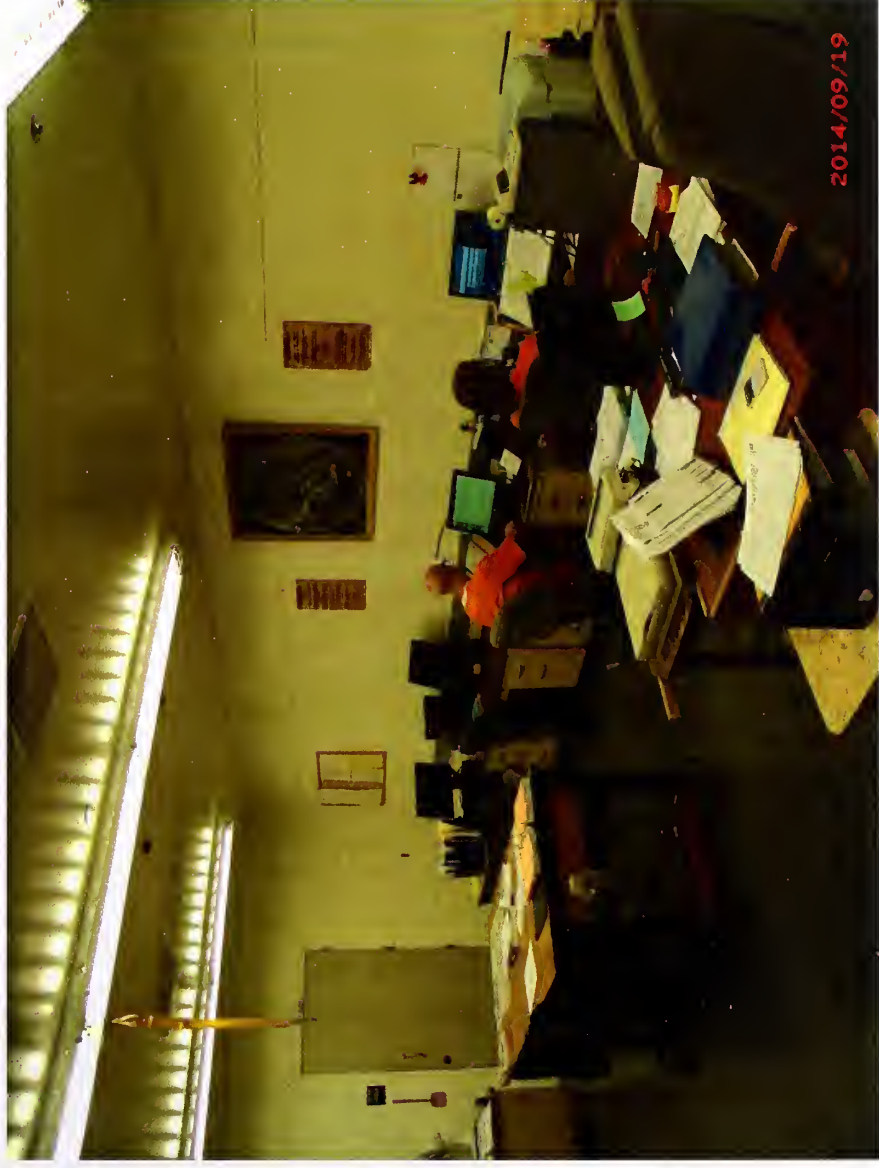


Program: WY Brand Industries Braille
Established: 2009
Operated by: Corrections Industries

WY BRAND INDUSTRIES BRAILLE

TORRINGTON, WYOMING

CURRENT: 8 Braille Transcribers
6 full time, 2 part time



WY BRAND INDUSTRIES BRAILLE

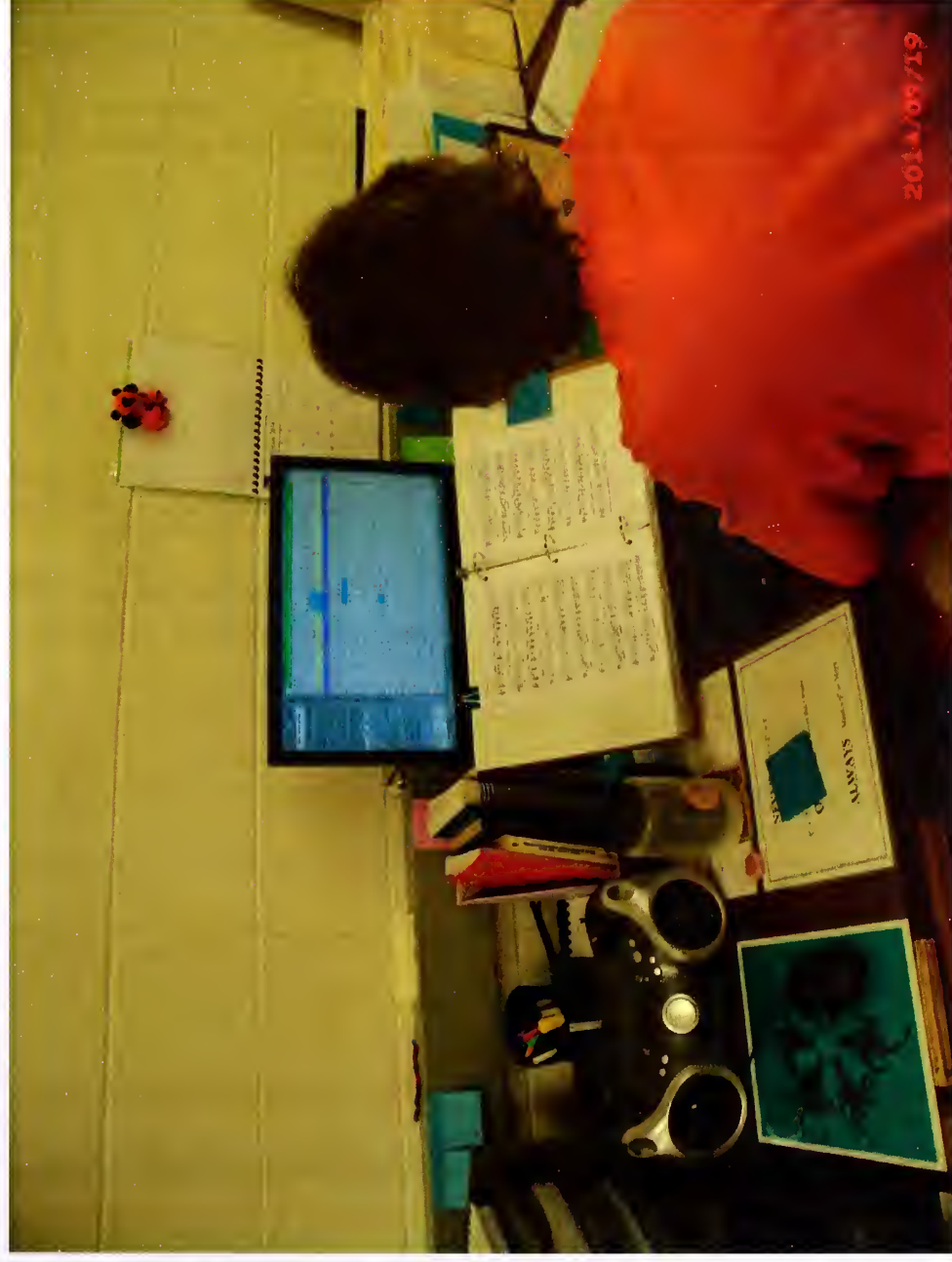
TORRINGTON, WYOMING



WY BRAND INDUSTRIES BRAILLE

TORRINGTON, WY

Music Braille



WY BRAND INDUSTRIES BRAILLE

TORRINGTON, WYOMING

“Safari, So Good!”



2014/09/19





1/2/2015

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HF GROUP - IN



